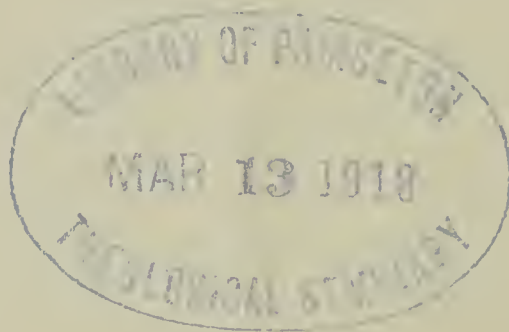


HELP  
WHEN TEMPTED  
AND TRIED  
—  
JEREMIAH ZIMMERMAN

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HELP  
WHEN TEMPTED  
AND TRIED

✓  
JEREMIAH ZIMMERMAN

D. D., LL. D.

✓  
*Libr. of religious thought*



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TO  
THE MEMORY OF  
MY FATHER AND MOTHER



## FOREWORD

I have written this book from an intense love for my fellowman, and an ardent desire to help. It appeals to the universal experience of mankind, for we can no more escape the conflicts of temptation and trial than we can escape from ourselves, but we may triumph over them all. We need to keep before us a true standard of moral and spiritual values, lofty ideals and a supreme motive for living. Such a life will be worth the living, and with an indomitable will we may triumph over seeming insurmountable difficulties, for strong will power is necessary to carry into execution the judgments of reason, and the convictions of conscience. Man wills the direction of his footsteps and the companions that he chooses, and thus he may be said to grow his own character, for no one can coerce his will.

Man is human, with human limitations and weaknesses, but he is not hedged in, and doomed by fate, for he is a child of God, and God is with him, and for him in every temptation and trial. Hence, no human failure is inevitable, for greater is He that is for us than all the agencies that are against us. Man is the masterpiece of the Almighty, and not Mt. Everest that towers heavenward nearly six miles above sea level, for man was made in God's own image, and in his soul he mounts up to God and communes with Him.

When severely tempted to do wrong, then seriously reflect upon these words: If I yield, what will be the consequences for me and my loved ones? Consider who you are; created in God's own image, with endowments for holding fellowship with Him. Think what God wants you to be, and will help you to be, and how you will degrade yourself, and bring sorrow upon yourself and others by yielding to the temptation. Think how you would appear to your friends, and to yourself in a life of shame and remorse. Think of Christ as He suffered for you on the Cross, and who sees you and wants to save you, but cannot against your will. Repeat it to yourself that God sees you. "How then can I do this evil and sin against my God?"

Then aided by the convictions of this supreme motive, *will* to resist the evil, and with a resolute will, stand by your moral convictions and do the right.



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**HELP WHEN TEMPTED AND TRIED**





# HELP WHEN TEMPTED AND TRIED

## CHAPTER I

### TEMPTATION TRIES EVERY ONE

**T**HE subject of this volume is of universal personal interest, for every man, woman, and child has learned the fact and power of temptation, and wished for an escape from its trying experiences. Were it not for the daily temptations that assail us, then we would have smooth sailing over the sea of life; then there would be no moral shipwrecks and crushed hopes with shame and remorse; then there would be no guilty conscience and none of the terrible struggles within the soul against sin; then there would be no jails, no wrongs, and persecutions, and Paradise would never have been lost and the mournful history of mankind would not have been enacted. Then the infamy of Judas Iscariot would not have been chronicled, the high priest and mob would not have clamored for Barabbas instead of Jesus, and the Roman governor would not have been immortalized by his appalling political crime, through all the Christian Centuries wherever the significant words of the Apostle's Creed are repeated: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate."

By temptation I refer to whatever tempts, entices, induces, or inclines us to evil, and which we must resist.

All know something about this subject from personal experience, for the best of men, as well as the worst, have lamented the power of temptation and their failure to live as they ought to live. No escape has been discovered, though men sought it in the cloister, or in the solitude of the caves of the desert. The apostle to the Gentiles was no exception, but deplored the fact of indwelling sin, and we all repeat the confession that "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things we ought not to have done."

Christ Jesus, the God Man who came to save sinners, was likewise assailed by the tempter, but He alone was sinless and could challenge His enemies to convict Him of sin. All the efforts of the ascetics ended in lamentable failure, and had not so much as the merit of love for others; for in their selfishness they forsook others to their fate and sought only their own salvation, instead of following Christ who ever went about doing good unto others.

For many years I have mingled with all classes and conditions of men, many of whom had suffered from the grievous temptations that try men's souls, and I have learned to know something of the struggles through which they passed in their trying experiences. In my efforts to comfort and encourage them, I always endeavored to strengthen them for their trials by giving them a supreme motive that would induce them to summon all the energies of their being, and enable

them with strenuous and concentrated will power to stand firm by their moral convictions to duty.

I sought to awaken their dormant moral and spiritual forces, and to take hold on God's proffered help, and to have faith in Him and in themselves; for "faith is the victory that overcometh the world;" and when a man loses his faith in God and in himself, then he loses the battle of life, and defeat is inevitable. You must believe that the Lord reigneth, and that so long as your cause is just and your purpose is noble, you cannot fail, but must finally win; for in such a life we are laborers together with God, and He who is for us is greater than all that are against us. Hence in the greatest conflict we must not despair, but grasp firmly the truth of Christ's presence whilst saying with a will, "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me." For "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able" to bear.

This does not mean that you will be able to achieve whatever you undertake, for the best of men often fail to bring to a successful issue some noble purpose, because of the opposing forces of evil; but that does not mean that the life has been a failure. That man is an utter failure in life, who fails to undertake and follow his moral convictions because of opposition and difficulties.

We are not responsible for results, but for fidelity to duty. Paul's plans were often thwarted by evil men, but he persisted in following his convictions, though his fidelity to duty meant persecution, imprisonment and martyrdom, for he felt that necessity was laid upon him to follow his Master, and he rejoiced that



he was accounted worthy to suffer for Him.

You were made in God's own image and for a high destiny as one of His children. He puts you upon your honor not to dishonor His name. He trusts you in spite of your weakness and sinful nature, for He stands ready to give you every needed help. There is tremendous moral effect in the fact that God entrusts us with the extension of His kingdom in the world, in preaching the gospel, in carrying on institutions of mercy, in leading pure and honest lives, just as the merchant, banker, and manufacturer must trust their employces.

We cannot escape the moral dynamic or effect of the great motive power that inspires every man when he feels that God has put him on his honor to fulfill the duties of his station, and that He expects him to be faithful. Such a realization or awakening of aspiration after lofty ideals would tend to engender love, devotion, faith and indomitable will to be true to duty and to God.



## CHAPTER II

### GUARD YOUR THOUGHTS

**W**HETHER temptations come from without or within, they must be fought and overcome within the soul. We must recognize the fact of temptation as a stern reality and that many of the prominent men and women, as well as the obscure ones, have gone down before it in disastrous defeat. We must reckon with it. We cannot try to ignore it and affect indifference, for no boasted conceit can shield us from the strength of temptation that assails every soul. We must summon all our strength to overcome it, or else we shall be overcome by it.

The heroic men and women of history became such, not by a life of ease and indulgence, but by being schooled through severe conflicts that developed strength of character; for human greatness can come only through a life of devoted service for humanity. To be something, we must grow and do something.

Jesus warns and gives us the antidote for temptation: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." We need the warning, for thoughtless indifference has caused the fall of many. Especially must we watch the character of the thoughts that we entertain; for we live in the realm of our thoughts. They take the initiative in all that we do and are; for they

awaken desires, create tendencies and shape our lives. It is ever true that nothing is so potent as a thought; for man is a thinker, and as he thinks within himself so he is and does, and thought rules the world.

The history of mankind is the illustration of this fact, as may be seen in the religious, moral, social, and political thought of the home and the state, and the practice of these. The thoughts are antecedent to action and human conduct. No man ever committed an act of theft or burglary before he thought of stealing, and the same is true of vice and the whole category of crimes; for the thought preceded the act. The same is true of every deed of love and mercy.

All the charities bestowed, the smallest as well as the greatest endowments of millions, were the outward expression of some earnest thinking. Hence the importance of right thinking and of guarding our thoughts carefully; for though entertained in secret they are potent in shaping the issues of life. It is within this invisible realm of our thoughts which no eye can penetrate, that the all important decisions for time and eternity are made. Here we experience the greatest conflicts of life, and experience the greatest joys as well as the most bitter sorrows. Here the decisive battles are fought, lost, or won; for in these inner struggles, men gain the victory or suffer disastrous defeats.

Hence we must not only abstain from evil deeds, but from evil and impure thinking; for thoughts and desires express themselves in deeds just as effect follows cause, and they will determine our conduct and character. Therefore the Prophet Isaiah exhorts:—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his

thoughts and return unto Jehovah, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God for He will abundantly pardon.”

The source and fountain must be pure, or the stream will be defiled. The stream does not rise higher than its source, and a man will not rise above his best thoughts, for they are his ideals, visions, and plans for life, and his dominant thoughts will bear fruit after their kind. Often we are startled by hearing of the sudden downfall of some unsuspected one, but we saw not the secret forces at work in his low ideals and purposes—they wrought the ruin.

Every man realizes at times the inner conflict between good and evil, for there is a better and a worse man within each one of us—one aspiring after lofty ideals, and the other falling far below them. I am persuaded that all sane men and women in their better moments lament their sins and wish they were much better than they are. It is because of this indwelling sin that often the characters of men become such strange contradictions—a sort of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde—and of which we ourselves become so utterly ashamed because of our shortcomings. It is not the better I, but the sin which dwelleth in us that so often defeats our noblest resolutions.

When I was a boy, my mother showed me a booklet containing a number of full page pictures that represented the human heart, and surrounding it were all manner of evil creatures seeking to enter. Into the first heart they had not yet entered, but in the second several had intruded themselves, whilst more had gained entrance into the third, and the number increased with



the series until the heart was crowded with the most loathsome beings, beasts, and demons. That book made a profound impression upon me, because of the terrible fact illustrated by the crude pictures. It was the sinful heart of man of which Jesus said:—"The things which proceed out of the mouth come forth out of the heart; and they defile the man, for from within, out of the heart of men evil thoughts proceed—fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceits, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness—all these things proceed from within and defile the man."

It is not the flesh but the heart that is the seat or source of sin. Of course this word heart does not here mean the organism of flesh, but all the mental and moral activity of the soul; or all that is involved in the intellectual, emotional, moral, and volitional elements in our being, and these constitute the real man.

What makes the marked lives of men—their individual characteristics? These do not consist in their physical proportions—in their height, weight, complexion, and general appearance, nor even in their ancestry and environment, however potent these influences may be. Men born under the most adverse circumstances have risen to the highest stations of honor and efficiency, whilst some born under the most favorable conditions have fallen the lowest. Lincoln was one of the multitudes from the lowly class who have won out gloriously; and the suicidal millionaire young man who recently became so much disgusted with his debauched life that he had wasted in sin and selfish living, is but one of the tens of thousands who willed to disobey

God and to serve the flesh and the devil. God is no respecter of persons. He calls upon all to choose whom they will serve, for He would save all.

But if the young wilfully exclude God from their thoughts and lives, and prefer indulgence in sinful desires, then retribution will follow, for the life cannot be right whilst the motive and heart are wrong. Man is not absolutely fated and hedged in except by his own self-will and the accumulated power of the evil habits that he himself formed by disobedience to the explicit will of God. If he refused to heed God's warning and the examples of others, but secretly polluted his soul by lascivious thoughts and sought out evil companions, then he must suffer the bitter fruits of the sensualist; for the subjective evil-doer no less than the objective evil-doer, makes his own hell.

How particular some are in the selection of those whom they admit within the limited circle of friends! They must have some social standing and refined manners at least, or their doors will be closed against them. They would not open their doors to some notoriously immoral men and women, and yet into their hearts they may admit and entertain with sinful pleasure, those with whom they would be ashamed to be seen in public. This is neither consistent nor safe.

The common house fly has no longer a friend among intelligent people, for he is known to be infected and a dangerous enemy to the welfare of the household, and therefore all are bent upon the extermination of the unclean and deadly infector. But we should maintain the same inflexible and uncompromising attitude toward the subjective or mental visions of the associates that we

entertain in our thoughts. We cannot prevent their coming, but we need not encourage them to remain. We can expel them by cherishing other thoughts of things that are pure and true and good. We must carefully guard the character of whatever is entertained in our hearts; and we have been warned to "keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

We must particularly guard the weakest point, for it was there that Abraham, Noah, Moses, David, Peter, and all their successors have been overcome. Temptation, like a cold, attacks the weakest point; and hence giants in strength, like Samson, have fallen before temptation. They were strong to stand against certain temptations, but when assailed by the enemy at their weakest point they fell, just as the city of Jerusalem did, when the assault was made at its weakest point. The apostle sounded the necessary warning—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;" for no man is beyond the power of temptation.

Mythology tells us that Achilles was supposed to have been made invulnerable by having been dipped, when a babe, in the river Lethe, except in the heel by which he had been held; but it was in that one vulnerable place that the fatal arrow penetrated. It is all important that we should endeavor to know ourselves—the best and the worst that is in us—our strong points and also our weakest ones. These we must strengthen by growing in grace and by guarding them against sudden temptation, lest in some unexpected moment we should be overcome. The break of a chain occurs in the weakest link, and we must know where our weakness lies.



If it is in hasty and violent speech, then guard the moment of provocation and try to suppress the uprisings of anger by a moment of silence, until you recover the mastery of calmness before you speak. In this way you will be able to master your violent temper instead of being mastered by it, and you will escape the embarrassment and subsequent bitter regrets for having yielded to intemperate speech.

We should often take a careful inventory of what dwells in our heart, for whilst many thoughts that come have been unsolicited and are unwelcome, others are according to our likings, and by their dominant character will tend mightily to shape our lives. They grow tendencies; for there is a correspondence between the ideals of the inner man and his outward life, just as there is between the seed and the harvest.

To live aright we must think aright; and to do noble things we must think noble things. It is unchristian to hate our neighbors or those in other churches, and when we indulge this passion and cease to love then we cease to be Christian.

No wonder that so many are so unhappy and dissatisfied with their lot, for they are out of harmony with God and their better self. It is not so much due to their environment, their neighbors, or physical condition, but to their ideals and their abnormally developed temperament or frame of mind. The fault is not with the world, but with their own ideals and purposes in life; they do not think aright nor give Christ the preëminence in their hearts. They may be able to weep with some who weep, but envy and selfishness will not permit them to rejoice with them that rejoice. They get no pleasure in viewing the prosperity of others.



## CHAPTER III

### PREJUDICE AND ABUSE OF THE TONGUE

WE know the power of prejudice and how the reputation and influence of men have been destroyed by it when base misrepresentation and slander attacked character and impugned the motive of the one assailed. The noblest men who served our country most faithfully and at the greatest personal sacrifice, did not escape the malignant assaults of base and unscrupulous men because of overmastering envy and hatred. It led the Jewish Sanhedrin to conspire against Jesus until they nailed Him to the cross, and it persecuted the Apostle Paul with a deadly-bitter hate until the Jews at Lystra excited the frenzied mob to attempt his life.

The prejudice that comes from some personal grievance, from failure and hateful envy, not only clouds the reason and holds conscience and sense of justice in abeyance, but embitters to unreasonable and obstinate persistence the victim of this immoral distemper. Hence prejudice becomes a potent and dangerous weapon in society because it can be wielded in secret and without the knowledge of the one assailed who might otherwise defend himself by disproving the charges.

Jesus warns us that for every idle word we speak, we must give an account—"for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words shalt be condemned." He

saw the wide-reaching results of bitter words and words that misrepresented and conveyed false impressions. Words do not die as soon as spoken, but the influence continues like the seed that has fallen into the earth when it germinates. Contemplate the horrible wrongs, the crimes and wars caused by an awakened prejudice, and followed by poisonous words of bitter hate. They have destroyed happy homes and reputations, broken hearts, and caused riots, persecutions, and murder.

Jesus saw how the multitude He had attracted, was alienated from Him by the prejudicial words of the priests who because of envy conspired against Him and His teachings. They moved among the people with bitter hate, and strove to break the power of Jesus as they said to them, "this is a hard saying, who can hear it?" and they all turned away from Him, even from Him who came to save them and whom they needed so much. Christ in great sorrow beheld it all, and with deep solicitude for His disciples He turned to them and said: "Would ye also go away?" Simon Peter answered Him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

What an awful responsibility those priests assumed when they undertook to prejudice the people against their only Savior. Sickness, sorrow, pain, and death came to them all; and how much they lost because the priests had prejudiced them against the Christ who wanted to bless every one of them with the blessing that they greatly needed! The men who by their influence deprived them of these needed blessings, have much to answer for, and no one would be willing to assume such

a responsibility. But we are daily exerting an influence upon others, and we are responsible for what we say and even for our silent influence, for there are times when we must speak for Christ, truth, and right, and it would be treason to remain silent.

Prejudice unchecked becomes blind and deathless, and has not stopped short of murder or the destruction of whatever or whoever stands in its way. It led the anarchists to dynamite the building in the city of Los Angeles in order to destroy the property of the capitalist whom they hated, although they knew that act would also destroy the lives of the many innocent ones who were in the building at that time.

The Gospel tells that many of the Jews believed on Jesus after He had raised Lazarus from the dead, and the chief priests met in council to resist the rapidly growing influence of Jesus, "and they took counsel that they might put Him to death" as the only effective way to silence Him. But the people went out to Bethany to see Lazarus whom Jesus had raised from the dead, and this living witness to the wonderful power of Christ made many converts for Him, and the faith of all His followers was confirmed and strengthened. Hence, "the chief priests took counsel that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away and believed on Jesus." Lazarus was innocent but they would not hesitate to kill him in order to destroy the power of his personal evidence as a witness for the superhuman power of One who had raised him from the dead.

The tongue itself is not responsible for getting us into so much trouble, but our abuse of it, and because of



the selfishness, envy, jealousy, and hate within our hearts. It never acts from its own initiative, but in accordance with our thoughts, feelings, and will, for, "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." "The tongue of the wise uttereth knowledge aright, but the mouth of fools poureth out folly." There must be knowledge and wisdom in the man before it can be expressed with the lips, for "wisdom rests in the heart of understanding, but even in the inward part of fools all is blabbed." The physical tongue is not at fault, but the poorly balanced understanding; for the tongue is only a necessary member of the instrument for the vocal expression of our thoughts. It never would be an unruly member if the heart were always right; for this indispensable member is wholly controlled by the inner spirit of the man. It is not the tongue that coins the words, that causes angry sentences and scathing denunciations as well as vulgar, obscene, and profane language to be uttered, but the sinful heart, the hate and violent temper within us.

Once Paul breathed out threatenings against the followers of Christ, but after his conversion—with a changed heart and mind, he exclaimed, "Who can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus?" It was the same tongue that uttered the remarkably changed sentiments, but Paul had experienced a change of heart—his convictions had been so greatly changed that he was really a new man in Christ Jesus—"old things had passed away and all things had become new."

It is all nonsense to talk about men who are leading bad lives having good hearts. It is a contradiction of terms to say that a man has a good heart, who by his

moral infidelity breaks the heart of his wife. We may conclude that the heart is not right when men indulge in obscene and profane language, and when they are controlled by an irritable temper. Men, and women as well, might control their tempers if they would cultivate more love, and cherish kind feelings toward others.

Think how our heavenly Father bears with us, though we are so unworthy and fall so far below our ideals; but we repent in sorrow and shame and turn to him for forgiveness. But Christ has told us that unless we forgive our fellowman, our Father in Heaven will not forgive us; and we should think of this when we refuse to forgive. We often have wished that the speech of some might be censored, for with the tongue we “bless the Lord and Father, and therewith curse we men who are made after the likeness of God.”

The Apostle James refers to the evils of an unbridled tongue: “Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than for him.” The only remedy is to guard the thoughts and have love abound in our hearts, as that will improve our disposition; for it is ever true that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

We have little patience with those we dislike, and if prejudiced against them we see the evil only and not the good, whilst “love covereth a multitude of sins” in others. This is illustrated in the history of religions, politics, and nations. All depends upon which side the man stands.

## CHAPTER IV

### FACT OF SIN AND THE ANTIDOTE

**T**HE terrible fact of sin is an undeniable one. Men may speculate and differ as to the origin of evil, and ask why God permitted it, and none can answer; but we all are agreed as to its prevalence and heinous character, for it is as universal as the human race. It has marred the divine image in man, so that his history from the earliest dawn of creation has been one of mournful suffering, caused by transgression against himself and the rights of others. Man's greatest enemy from prehistoric times has been man himself and not the wild beasts. All the shocking crimes, the wrongs of oppression and disastrous wars of conquest, as well as standing armies, police force, jails, reformatories, locks and barred windows, are the unmistakable evidences of the prevalence and dreadful character of sin.

The heart sickens as we contemplate the appalling war that has involved all Europe in its horrible slaughter of millions of our fellowmen. Never has the world been cursed by a war of such gigantic proportions, territorial magnitude, and disastrous consequences. Never has there been such a destructive war of property and inestimable human possibilities for future generations. Never has there been such an utterly unreasonable and unjustifiable war. The unspeakable



shame and sorrow of it all is that the war is in this generation of the world's highest civilization and waged by Christian nations against Christian nations in awful slaughter of Christian men, who until recently were friends and labored together as Christian brethren, for the evangelization of the world.

In the face of this world-calamity for national extermination by a wholesale slaughter of the best men of Europe who were in no way responsible for the war, and thereby breaking the hearts of the many millions of loved ones at home—who will pretend to say that sin is not a reality or that it has lost its potency? Nothing is so ruinous in its consequences as sin. It debases and enslaves man who was created in God's own image, and who was endowed with faculties of mind to fit him for the highest and noblest destiny among his fellowmen and for communion with his heavenly Father—but to what shameful depths of wickedness he has fallen. He has surrendered his freedom and manhood, and become enslaved by the inexorable power of sin so that he follows it with devotion, because of its remorseless dominion.

Men and women of every rank are under its sway, although pauperized and disgraced by their servitude, for their reason and conscience have been led captive by sin. Sin is no mere figment of the imagination, no theological bugbear, some ecclesiastical tradition to frighten the young, but which we have outgrown with the advance of culture, knowledge and scientific discovery. The young may be deceived to think so, but if they yield to the tempter, then they must suffer the sad consequences, and through life suffer from the sins of their



youth.

Sin has nothing to commend it; for it has no redeeming trait nor compensation—nothing costs so much and gives so little in return. Sin means to miss the mark; and the man who expects satisfactory results, misses his calculation, for sin is a great waste of character, health, happiness, friends, and money—with death as the wages; whilst remorse of conscience will complete the ruin. Sin has destroyed the happy home and caused the greatest sorrows that ever afflicted humanity. There never would have been a *Paradise Lost* had it not been for sin, and we would have *Paradise Regained*, could sin be removed from the human heart.

Sane men do not rejoice in their life of sin; nor do they feel proud and publicly proclaim the deeds of unrighteousness as something worth boasting about. The skeletons are kept concealed in that inner closet of man, and they are not exhibited to the public. Men would even blot them out of their memory if they could. There is every reason why we should at once resist temptation to sin. Our highest welfare is at stake, and the future issues are all uncertain in case we yield. The only safeguard and assurance lies in overcoming the first temptation; for that sin renders subsequent ones more easy and not more difficult. Before the transgression the conscience was clean and sensitive, shuddered before suggestion to evil, and with a righteous indignation resented every inducement to an act of vice, whatever allurements may have been presented.

But the man who yields to the first temptation is more likely to yield to the next and each successive one, for the power of temptation increases with every

indulgence; whilst conscience and the power of resistance suffer weakness from the defeat. Every indulgence grows like habit, whilst conscience loses its restraining power in the same ratio. Virtue stands abashed at vice and abhors the presence and suggestions of evil thoughts; but after virtue has yielded to temptation, what an awful transformation in that woman who sells herself for merchandise and stalks the public street with brazen mien to tempt men to a life of shameful and damning vice. The descent to hell has been as rapid as it was easy after she took the fatal step over the precipice.

There is great gain in every victory over temptation to sin, but especially in the first; whilst there is serious loss, weakened power of resistance and increased susceptibility to temptation with every surrender. No moral weakness can be eliminated or overcome by gratifying it. To indulge the appetites will only stimulate and develop them. Exercise strengthens but does not repress nor destroy. By yielding, we increase the temptation and weaken ourselves. We should encourage and develop the opposite virtues, and by the strenuous practice of them, they will become strong, and we shall be able to overcome the evil with good; but to hesitate or to compromise for once, may prove our ultimate ruin.

No man is free from indwelling sin, and even the best of men realize and deplore its power; for all come short in the fulfilment of duty. We fall below our ideals, though we struggle against the tyranny of sin that affects our thoughts, desires and purposes—and often defeats our best resolutions by leading us to do

what we ought not to do. Whilst we have no power to eradicate the indwelling sin of our corrupt natures, we may summon power to resist the full exercise of the evil dispositions of the heart; for in spite of all the strongest tendencies to evil, the committing of the act itself is voluntary on our part and yet so strong in many cases may be the temptations that we are on perilous ground and need the grace of God to save us.

We must turn to God for His superadded help. Alone we fall, but by His strength we may stand, and having done all things, we may stand secure. The weak and fallen have done this when they laid hold on Christ. Then we have fellowship with the Divine One, and we cannot commit evil deeds whilst dwelling with Him, for He says: "If any man love Me he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." Here is our hope, our safeguard is in Christ, and away from all fellowship with the organized forces and followers of unrighteousness who are controlled by the basest motives and passions.

When Christ reigns in the heart, He so influences our dispositions and aims that the indwelling power of sin ceases to exercise dominion over us. Sin remains, but the spirit of God reigns within us with dominant power—and with the consciousness of His presence, we shall realize a mighty helper.

Whilst sin is inherent in every man, many increase its well-nigh irresistible power and bring themselves into a hopeless and degrading bondage, by disregarding the divine warning not to sow any wild oats,—be-



cause of that stern, irreversible law, that man must reap whatever he sows—no matter how much he may deplore that sowing with bitter regrets. There is no such thing as independent or isolated acts in human life but all are related—as cause and effect. We can never get rid of the sins of our youth. They are not only a part of our being and moral consciousness, but they have their bearing upon our subsequent life. Ols-hausen states the truth forcibly when he says: “Nothing is more dangerous than the erroneous opinion that an evil act can stand alone, or that a man can commit one sin and then stop. All evil is concatenated, and every sin increases the power of the indwelling corruption in a fearful progression until sooner than the sinner dreams of, his head swims and he is plunged into the abyss.”

The man who deliberates suicide and jumps from the tenth story window, may regret the act before he reaches the fifth story but that will not save him from striking at the bottom. The first step we take is the most critical one, and that step is the easiest for us to control. It is all important to act with prompt resistance whenever the temptation presents itself, for then we are sure of the mastery. Then you can overcome, but to dally and encourage the tempter may prove your ruin. All men could have declined to accept the first strong drink, for then there was no strong appetite; and had they refused that first glass, then there would never have been a drunkard, and the world of humanity would have escaped the unspeakable woes, shame, and crimes of intemperance. They became enslaved by the despotism of strong drink because they

did not refuse to take the first glass.

Could they have foreseen the results, the moral and physical wrecks, the sorrow, poverty, wretchedness, and degradation of all that is best in humanity, then they would have dashed the cup from them and the awful history of the curse of intemperance, would never have been enacted. But the only assurance of safety against this demon of drunkenness lies in total abstinence and safety should be first. To abstain means absolute freedom, but to yield has meant slavery to millions.

Sin looks very different after it once has been committed. Then it is shorn of all the blandishments of the tempter who made it so attractive, and this, every evildoer has realized. The strong inducements that once incited him have vanished and only shame and remorse remain—as the defaulter and criminal realize when once detected. Sin does find out the evildoer after the crime has been committed, and dogs him at every step making a coward of him, even when the darkness of night hides him from the eyes of men; for though he escapes the detectives, he cannot escape from himself and the consciousness of his misdeeds.

Remember that when a sin has been committed, that is not the end of it; for the consequences remain and we cannot escape the fruits of wrongdoing. There is an awful law, and as infallible as inflexible, that “whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” It is still true as when first spoken as a warning. It runs like an irresistible truth through the masterpieces of literature; for through the centuries the remorseless punishment has wrung the mournful cry of anguish

from the human soul of the transgressor.

It is all important for the young to keep themselves pure and flee youthful lusts if they would enjoy healthy and vigorous bodies; for many have been shorn of their strength and suffered from weakness all their days because of early sins. They may deplore the past, bitterly repent and lead a better life and God may forgive them, but the scars will remain; for God's forgiveness does not carry with it a new and different body with restored sight lost in a drunken brawl, nor the limb that was lost by an act of disobedience.

The life of a young man was crushed during a state of intoxication, by falling before a passing train. The mother came to me in great sorrow and said: "What have I done that God has brought this awful trouble upon me?" I was shocked at her remark, for I knew the life that her son led, and I assured her that our heavenly Father was in no way responsible for that death, for He was the author of all good and not of evil; that He never made a man drunk, nor threw one of His children under the wheels of a train; that the sad death was wholly due to her son's own disobedience, for God wanted to save him and have him live as a faithful son; and had he obeyed instead of yielding to sin, then he might be alive and leading a useful and happy life.

Cause and effect are inseparably related, and they who sow to the flesh must expect to reap the fruits of their sowings, even though they repent later and find forgiveness; for God will not restore their youth nor the wasted years and opportunities spent in a life of sin.



## CHAPTER V

### SELFISHNESS AND INTEMPERANCE

**F**OR years I have studied the ways and motives of the transgressor, and I have found that selfishness is fundamental in all sin. The evil-doer wants his own way and will not conform to the will of God nor yield to the entreaty of members of his own household, but wrecks his welfare rather than deny his selfish desires and purpose. Analyze it carefully and you will see that the secret cause of the violation of all the Ten Commandments can be traced to selfishness. This was true of the first sin committed in Eden. Our first parents were contented with their estate in Paradise until the tempter suggested that their lot was grievous because of the restraint that God had imposed upon them. Then they impeached God's goodness because of that single prohibition—they disobeyed His command and yielded to the tempter in the hope of gaining thereby some advantage for themselves, and not foreseeing the irresistible ruin to themselves and others.

Selfishness was the dominant element in the sin of Cain, who because of envy slew Abel, "because his works were evil, and his brother's righteous." The same is true of every sin of disobedience, unbelief, lying, deception, misrepresentation, prejudice, opposition, persecution, hate, dishonesty, theft, coveting, adultery, ill-

temper and murder. They want their own way regardless of the will of God and the rights and welfare of their fellowmen. Hence the dishonesty in weights and measures, the taking of graft and the misappropriation of public funds; for it is still true that "the love of money is a root of all evil," and it buys everything that is brought to the markets of the world.

I never have been so much impressed with the weakness, the meanness and selfishness of man, as in his lack of conscience and honor in meeting his financial obligations. There are many who sell none of their wares at so low a price as themselves. "Thou shalt not steal," is one of the Ten Commandments, but their supreme selfishness long since has eliminated it from their moral code, although they insist upon others being honest.

Jonah was a striking example of selfishness, for he would have all the men, women, and children of that great city of Nineveh perish rather than he should be denied any comforts. It was selfishness that caused Judas Iscariot to commit the crime that has branded him through all the Christian centuries as the arch traitor of history. The same sin led to the downfall of Benedict Arnold, and we may trace to selfishness the blackest crimes of history. It conspired against Jesus until it nailed Him to the cross. Pilate knew that it was because of envy that the high priests sought His death; for he said to them: "I find no fault in Him," and he would have freed Him; but when they challenged him with the terrible threat that if he let Jesus go, then he was not Cæsar's friend, he feared for his own position and delivered the innocent one to be



crucified.

The selfishness of the evil-doers cannot pray the petition in the Lord's Prayer "Thy kingdom come," for that would frustrate their wicked ways. They never pray "Not my will, but Thine be done," for they seek self only and have not the spirit of Christ. They would not abstain from any desire, for the sake of others as Paul enjoins upon us; but like Cain the murderer, they cast off all obligations for others with the sneer that they are not their brother's keeper.

They assume an air of strict independence, and act themselves in seeking their own; for personality is just what we ourselves are—nothing less and nothing more. It does not consist in what we possess, nor in the size and form of our physical being, but in the character of the inner intellectual, moral, and spiritual man. Herein is the selfishness. A wife came in great sorrow and told me how the man she had loved, trusted, and married, had become intemperate. He grew worse and worse until shame could no longer keep her from revealing the sorrow of her heart, for she feared lest reform should be impossible. She told me that one night when he returned at a late hour in a state of intoxication, he cursed her and struck her a hard blow in the face. Overcome with grief at his shocking condition, she burst into tears and said to him whom she had married as a temperate and faithful husband: "Charlie, that is not you." How true! for it was not the Charlie that she once knew and who had pledged his love and fidelity; for drink had crazed him to pauperize, beat, and curse the very one that he once fondly loved, for he would not deny himself for her sake.

One evening a man addicted to drink came to me in great stress of mind; for he had reached a terrible crisis in his slavery; and, despairing of escape after two days and nights spent in a saloon, he had resolved to take his life. He had gone to the canal that ran through the city, with the purpose of drowning himself. As he stood on the bank of the canal and looked upon the water, something seemed to urge him to go and see me. He obeyed the prompting and was saved from suicide; for I welcomed him, prayed with him, and encouraged him with a supreme motive for making a man of himself by living his life hid with Christ in God, and ever looking unto Him, the author and finisher of our faith, whenever the temptation for drink tried him. I impressed him with the selfish character of drink, that leads a man to sacrifice the happiness and welfare of others merely to gratify a temporary, depraved appetite. I gave him a pledge, and with a will he vowed on his sacred honor, that with God's help he would not touch the accursed drink again. I gave him a few lines to read and to show to any one who would tempt him to drink—that was years ago, and he has remained steadfast.

Of the many whom I have helped to throw off the demon of drink, I recall a sad mother with a boy of twelve years of age, who realized his father's maudlin condition and cried when he returned home under the influence of drink. I made an engagement to meet her husband and that evening she brought him. I tried to impress him and I read a brief pledge after I had prayed with him. He listened intently and then said: "Can you not make it stronger?" I replied that it

was strong enough, and that he would never fall if he kept that pledge, for he would never get drunk unless he drank. Knowing his frailty, he burst into tears and said: "If you do not save me from drink, I am lost." I replied that I could not stop drinking for him; and I tried to arouse his moral consciousness to feel his duty to God, his wife and child, and not to gratify his mean selfish appetite that was destroying his home and breaking the hearts of others, as well as destroying his own body and soul. I told him that by his intemperance he was the worst enemy to himself, his wife and child, and that he would denounce any other man who would commit such wrongs, as an inhuman monster. I said, "What would you think of your wife, if she were a drunkard?" Then I appealed to the best that was in him and sought to fortify him with new incentives and higher motives for service for God and humanity. The wonderful transformation followed, and he kept his vows. What an infamous crime it would have been for any one to tempt that man to break his pledge and return to drink? Many are responsible for just such crimes.

There is often self-restraining power in making a solemn pledge, and men feel this when they ask us to give them a pledge. Whilst the man is morally bound to do his duty, this imposes a special personal obligation that seems to grip with additional power his self-determining will. He solemnly has pledged his honor, and he dare not break it. He has made a special vow to God and calls upon Him to witness to the act. There is philosophy and psychology to warrant him in making this appeal, for it is illustrated in history



and the daily lives of men who would die rather than break their word of honor. The same principle and inner moral dynamic are here involved and they help to hold men true when they take the pledge to abstain from the curse of drink.

Merely to denounce the evil and call the intemperate man a fool is not sufficient, for he knows that; but what he needs is deliverance. Soon after the arrival of a newly elected pastor to a village church, he saw an intoxicated man leaning against a lamp post, and he said to him "Stranger, I see that you need some good advice." The man had not lost his wit, and at once interrupted him with these words: "Now there is where you are mistaken, for I have received more good advice than any man in town. I need a drink." What he needed was a man to arouse his moral and spiritual consciousness to action, to seize upon an overmastering motive for leading a different life, so that he might will to do what he knew that he ought to do.

Among the many strangers who have asked me to give them a "dime to get a sandwich and cup of coffee for a hungry man," a recent one was a graduate of Washington University, but as he confessed, drink got the better of him. He wore a bronze button bearing the symbol of the cross. I gave him the dime, but endeavored to strengthen him so as to lead a new life; and I told him of the precious meaning of that cross he wore, how it tells the character of sin and what God did through Christ on the cross to save the sinner. I tried to inspire him with a lofty motive, and not to defeat God's love and sacrifice for him; but when tempted by his sinful appetite, then to press that cross

over his heart until he felt the power and presence of Christ in his soul.

I often think of that famous Scotch surgeon and physician, Dr. Abernethy, when I see the slaves to drink. One day a man suffering in body, called for consultation. The Doctor inquired as to his diet, and he found no fault with it. Then he asked what he drank. He replied that he drank wine and ale. "Is that all?" the Doctor asked him, and the man added that he also drank whiskey because it did him good. Quickly came the retort "You lie—you drink because you like it, for none of those drinks do you any good, but harm only!" The man remained silent while Dr. Abernethy told him of the injurious effect of alcohol upon the human system, and gave him the best reasons for abstaining from all intoxicants. Then the patient with serious mood replied: "Doctor, you have convinced me thoroughly as to the pernicious effects of all alcoholic drinks, now convince me that I do not like them, and I will never drink them." He made a frank confession and my experience with drinkers is that he told the truth. They drink because they like it or the effect of the stimulus produced, but in so doing, they are surrendering their self-mastery.

Years ago I became interested in the general agent of a well-known publishing house. I met him often in his office, and observed on every occasion that he took up a little bottle and applied liquid to his highly colored nose. One day in sorrow, he confessed his weakness for drink. I persuaded him to attend my church the following Sunday morning. He regretted his promise, as he told me later; for he had stopped in three

saloons on the way, and taken other spirits within him, in the form of whiskey; but he felt bound by the honor of his word to keep his promise, and he came to my services. I had a message for him and the man was saved, for he was changed. He had taken his last drinks, and in due time the color of his nose became normal; and whenever I took his hand on the street, with the hearty grip and said: "How are you today, my friend?"

He replied "Fine," and pointed to the nose as the sign of improvement, for that had once betrayed him; but the new joy of his soul and the happiness of his home, were expressed in that changed countenance. It was the same old body, for his physical organism had not undergone the change that his spiritual being had experienced.

It is a most grievous wrong for the state to license any evil like the saloon for it militates against the well-being of the individual, the home, and society. There can be no justification in the appeal to the revenue received for the sacrifice of so many men and women. Take the report of the State Superintendents of Alms-house of the State of New York recently convened at Poughkeepsie. They all declared for national prohibition, affirming that more than seventy-five per cent of all the inmates of the institutions for the poor are due to drink. Why shall we continue to license and protect by law an unmitigated public evil that with un-failing results has converted hundreds of thousands of fathers, husbands, and sons into degenerates through intemperance? Is it not a crime against humanity and the weakness of man to create special places of temptation? We should protect the weak and not expose the



confessedly weak ones to legalized saloons. Are we not morally responsible for the unspeakable loss, sorrow, shame, and degradation caused by putting temptation in their way?

The following from *Collier's Weekly* of December 23, 1916, is a strong illustration of my point:

“John Keiner of Cincinnati was tried for the murder of his wife. Said he: ‘I was drunk and didn’t know what I was doing. That morning she had refused to get breakfast for me. I went to the saloon and got drunk. When I returned I was so drunk I didn’t realize what I was doing’ . . . We won’t go on with the details of the hammer and the butcher knife. Keiner pleaded guilty, and has been sentenced to life imprisonment. Those who made the stuff which inflamed him to slay have not been sentenced at all. In fact so far as I could find out when I was writing these sentences, they had not been placed on trial, or indicted, or even named.

There are a good many distillers in Cincinnati, where this Keiner tragedy happened. When they walk their prosperous way down the street to business of a sunny morning, no doubt they feel that all is well with the world. And their wives—the distillers’ wives, who wear good clothes and go to church on Sunday—we wonder if they ever reflect on the Keiners their husbands are making—and the Keiners’ wives.”

Josh Billings who was a philosopher, as well as a humorist, was not wide of the mark when he wrote: “My private opinyun of Rum iz—that the man who sells it to hiz fello man iz wuss than a hiwayman—the hiwayman demands yure munnv or yure life—the rum-

seller demands both.”

In this connection, I cannot do better than to quote from the *Outlook*, some lines from the once well-known pugilist, saloon keeper, and drunkard, John L. Sullivan, who believes that there would be comparatively little drunkenness if there were no saloons: “If I had not quit drinking when I did and gone to farming, with my good wife, there would be somewhere in a Boston suburb a modest tombstone with the inscription on it ‘Sacred to the memory of John L. Sullivan.’ That is why I am quitting the farm and ‘Coming back’ to have a GO with a bigger champion than I ever was—the champion of champions—John Barleycorn. There is only one way to get the best of John Barleycorn and that is to run away from him. There are men who say about liquor that they can take it or leave it, but they are the ones that always take it; and in the end it gets them. I am leaving the farm to say to the young of the United States: ‘Leave liquor alone. Liquor leads to bad companions, bad companions lead to evil places, evil places lead to disease and disease destroys the home and the nation.’ ”

## CHAPTER VI

### IDEALS AND CHARACTER

**I**T is not due to ignorance that most men yield to temptation, for they know what is wrong, as well as the bitter fruits of evil-doers who fill the jails and drunkards' graves. Strange that such a terrible penalty should not prove a deterrent, but the vice and crimes of the past are repeated by each successive generation. The guilty evil-doer knows that he wrongs himself when he allows himself to be led captive by temptation.

Much depends upon our ideals and supreme purposes in life, for they shape our character, our influence, our susceptibility to particular sins, and our power to resist them. It is the kind of men that we are growing, that will determine who we are to be. We grow day by day, and no one is just what he was a year ago or even yesterday; but we are different because of the additional impressions made upon our mind and heart by the desires awakened, and the thoughts that have had their impact upon our souls, for these have made us stronger or weaker, better or worse.

Our thoughts are real things, and our thinking is the most potent part of us, even though it may be poor and low thinking; for it will determine our doing and being, and it is all important that we should guard



the character of our mental habits.

We must be watchful as to our habits, for they are easily formed but hard to break—especially the bad ones; and habits make up the characteristics of the man. In later years, we realize that we are the result of antecedent thoughts, studies, purposes, and conduct; for our daily life of activity is largely mechanical or automatic from the force of repeated actions that became the unconscious but controlling habit of our being. It is true of our speaking, writing, walking, painting, playing, building. The expert player need not keep his eye on the key board; and the best things done by the masters are done with the least conscious effort, for they have grown the habit and the power to do. I have been deeply impressed with this fact when listening to great speakers and blind musicians who cannot see the instrument that they master.

Much will depend upon our ideals and purposes in life. They become our moral standards for daily conduct and they become powerful motives and incentives in directing our course and aim in life. We feel the controlling effect of what has been termed the dynamic idea of purposeful character, for God's moral law is written in the human heart, and it approves or condemns according to our conduct or obedience to that ideal. There is a mighty imperative in our ideals, for they are our deep convictions and controlling inner force that rise above passion and all the instincts of the lower nature that would, at times, drag us down to their level. There is tremendous potency in the ideals of regenerated humanity, for it is the power of the divine Christ in the man, and this union makes



for right living.

If our ideals and purposes have been low and vulgar, then we fall an easy prey to vice and the sins of the flesh; for our antecedents have made us what we are—either moral weaklings or else having the courage and power of our convictions so that we can stand by what we know is right. Had Joseph lived the immoral life of a prodigal son in Canaan, then away from home influence and as a slave in the house of Potiphar in Egypt he would have fallen before the temptations of an enticing mistress instead of tearing himself away from her embrace, as he protested: “How can I do this evil and sin against my God?”

Every city has an efficient fire department and police force to guard our homes, stores, banks, and factories by day and night, but we have no department of public safety to safeguard the moral character of our boys and girls when they go on the streets at night. The physical well-being of the people is guarded by an efficient health physician so that no unsanitary conditions are allowed to exist. The water, milk, and food supplies are scrupulously inspected, for health is a most valuable asset for a city and the prevention of smallpox and fevers is all important lest an epidemic should arise.

But there is a culpable neglect respecting the moral wellbeing; the young and middle-aged are not safeguarded, but public vice is allowed to keep open house three hundred and sixty-five days of the year, and the tempters walk the streets that men and women may be led astray. Of what avail is it to society and to the state if we disregard the highest welfare of our people

by allowing them to be exposed to the immoral tempter and consequent diseases that sap the vitality of the body, also, and leave nothing but physical and moral wrecks. The fruits of vice are not attractive and could the patrons foresee the end, and that they must reap a terrible retribution, then they might escape the tempter. I officiated at the funeral of a man—not long ago—who proved untrue to his own family and served the world, the flesh, and the devil—especially the flesh—with the result that his slavery wrecked his body and reduced him to poverty. He died in the county hospital, where for six years he suffered, not merely as a pauper, but paralyzed in body. During all that time he was unable to speak. There was nothing in that life to recommend vice, there was nothing but poverty, pain, shame, remorse, and death.

Curiosity has led many into sin, and though they did not intend to yield to the temptation, yet it became the fatal turning point in life, and they were never the same again. The glamour that the imagination gives to its pleasures of sin for a season, seems to make it attractive. The young and unsophisticated see only the bewitching painted face and seductive manners with enticing garb of the actor; but they see not behind the screens of a wasted life of sin—the loathsome, diseased, and often skeleton-like remains. In the hospitals and asylums they will find these pitiable and repulsive physical wrecks of humanity with not one attractive lineament that would tempt a human being.

Were there public museums in which were kept some genuine specimens of the ordinary fruits of vice, intemperance, and unrighteous living—such an exhibi-

tion might serve as a powerful deterrent for the young; for it would make a profound impression and the moral effect would be lasting and for good. In the great museums of the world, I never have seen such an exhibit; but there should be such a department added, so that the young might see the logical and finished products of a life of sin. It would be worth much more than some of the things taught the children; for it is of the highest importance that the children should be trained in our schools for moral living and noble American citizenship.

We have public exhibits of our various industries where the different products can be carefully studied; for the exhibitors are not ashamed of what they are turning out, but they compete with others and claim that their product is the best for the people. The manufacturers of food products show that their goods conduce to the health, economy, and general welfare of every consumer, and refer to well known people who have made the test. Why should not the same principle of publicity be given to those who conduct their business in the red light district as well as to the saloons; for both these institutions claim that their business is legitimate and a necessity for the people. Since this position is contested by so many of the best people, why do not the managers of these questionable resorts place in their windows—or in some public places—the finished product and testimony of some of the well known men and women who for years made a most thorough test by the sacrifice of themselves to a life of poverty, vice, and shame? Such an exhibition would be most repulsive, I admit, but it would tend to repel

and not attract patrons to places that lead to ruin. I believe the young would turn away in horror from gilded vice if they saw its bitter fruits, and why do we keep them in ignorance?



## CHAPTER VII

### DECIDE FOR CHRIST

**W**HAT is your decision? You can determine what books and papers you will read, the kind of people with whom you will associate, where you will spend your evenings, what pictures and thoughts you will cherish in your mind, for in that gallery of imagery you see visions that make you better or worse. You decide whether Christ shall have the supreme place in your heart or whether sin shall reign there. You alone decide whether you will go to the house of the Lord on Sunday to worship Him, or whether you will prefer the moving pictures, the saloon, or the house of the lewd. You decide what you shall eat and drink; the clothes you wear; and you determine the character of your associates, for you have the freedom of choice—but if you decide to become the slave to sin, then you lose your freedom. Seek fellowship with men and women of clean moral character, and keep away from all places of evil. Do not sit with the scornful, nor listen to men who are profane or obscene, and who slander the Church, for the worst men and women are not in the Church even though there are so many imperfect ones, since all are weak and human. The worst men and women are not members of the Church, but the best men and women are found there; and they are in-

terested in whatever tends to the highest betterment of mankind.

Be not disturbed by what some say flippantly against the Bible; for it is incomparably superior to any other book in the world. No other Bible has such a lofty conception of God as our loving heavenly Father; who sees and hears us when we pray; who pities, loves, and forgives; and who sustains and comforts. Our Bible alone tells us that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." You cannot match that passage from the Gospels, in all the literature of the Sacred Books of the East. It bears the unmistakable stamp of divinity; for God alone could make that revelation. It is sufficient to save the world; for it is the Gospel in the concrete; and its precious truth in connection with the rest of the Bible, has been inseparable from the history of the Christian Church.

At times the professed followers of Christ and even leaders in the Church, may have lost sight of their Divine Master, turning from the ideals of his spirit and teachings, bringing reproach upon the Church; and yet, making due allowance for the many and greatest evils committed under the sanction of the Church, there is no institution on earth that is comparable with its unselfish character and lofty influence over mankind. It has been the foremost and mightiest moral and spiritual transforming power throughout the world; and as a sociological and economic agency among men, it is invaluable to society and to the state. It is not the cost of the Church that bankrupts and im-

poverishes the homes; but it is sin that destroys happiness, degrades and makes paupers, and robs men of everything that makes life worth the living; whilst the Church surrounds the young, safeguards families, and ennobles them by giving lofty moral and spiritual ideals and enjoining conscientious fidelity to their neighbor and the state, as well as to God.

Auguste Sabatier in his *Religions of Authority* has expressed in a forcible manner, his estimate of the supreme place of the Church, and I quote it with hearty approval: "Taken all in all, where shall we find a higher or more universal school of respect and virtue than in the Church; a more efficacious means of comfort and consolation than the communion of the brethren; a safer tutelary shelter for souls still in their minority? And what part played in history is comparable to that of the Church in the history of European civilization? On the other hand, what can we say of the Bible which would not fall short of the reality? It is the book of all books, light of the conscience, bread of the soul, leaven of all reforms. It is the lamp that hangs from the arched roof of the sanctuary, to give light to those that are seeking God. The destiny of holiness on earth is irrevocably linked with the destiny of the Bible. Christianity neither can realize nor propagate herself without the Church; the Church cannot live without the Bible, that original and classic norm of religious life as it is manifested in the Church itself—these are potencies of fact, of historic authority."

We safely may say that no sane man with a family, ever would cast his vote to exile the Bible and the



Church from the city, state, and nation, if he knew that his particular vote could bring such a calamity upon the people. Many would rejoice to free the nation of all existing evils; but none would live in a country from which the Church and God's word had been banished; for that would mean a reign of terror, and life would be intolerable.

Christ announced Himself as the centre of the world's attraction when He should be lifted upon the cross—and that power extends to mankind. Nothing is so potent in humanity as the love and devotion expressed in voluntary sacrifice—and hence the unique place of the mother, and the patriot who dies for his country. Among the great paintings in the collection in the World's Exposition in Paris, there were three that attracted the multitudes, and it was a significant fact that they were not only religious subjects, but in each instance, the central figure was that of Christ. The one was a large canvas, and in the foreground lay a French soldier across his steed; for both had been slain on the field of battle, and the brief inscription: "*Pro Patria*," told the sad story that he had died for his country. The head of the patriot was resting against the foot of a cross, and upon that cross was the Christ of history, and over His head was the significant inscription "*Pro Humanitate*;" for Christ had died not merely as a patriot for His own native land, but to save the world.

The cross through the centuries has become the universal meeting place for all Christendom. In spite of all our racial, linguistic, social and theological differences, it has been the unifying center; for our peace



was made through the blood of this cross; and in none other than Christ is there salvation. Nowhere else is the heart of God's love and mercy seen as here; and we estimate the love by the sacrifice that its bestowal costs; for "he who was rich became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich," and in the end he was despised and rejected of men, and suffered the cruel and shameful death on the cross for us.

How can man in the face of that sacrifice, reject his Saviour and turn away to a life of sin? God saw man in his lost condition, and with boundless love He could endure it no longer, and He came to our relief. In no way can the human heart of sin be touched and won to Christ, as by the contemplation of the sacrifice that He made for us on the cross. That is John's argument when he writes "Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him—we love, because He first loved us." If we keep that love in view and follow Christ, then sin cannot reign in us; or, as John says "Whosoever abideth in Him, sinneth not."

In like manner, how can the man who feels interested in and devoted to his wife and children with a natural husband's and father's love, commit himself to adulterous relations with the bad woman? How can that man be happy and natural as he sits at his table with his loving family that suspect no evil? How he must be smitten with shame and self-reproach by his conscience, when the innocent and loving children cling to him with their arms about his neck, and with kisses, look into his eyes and call him their "Good papa!" No one

need tell you that such a man is happy; for sin is not conducive to happiness. The father who keeps himself pure and lives a life that is worthy of his children, such as will make them happy and not bring shame upon them,—such a man gets infinitely the most out of life. What a hell of remorse the wayward husband must suffer in times of sickness—perhaps brought upon him by his wicked deeds—when he looks into the pure face of his loving wife who never even suspected his unfaithful life of immorality! He realizes that there is no reward in sinning, and that the way of the transgressor fills the soul with bitterness and visions of perdition. Let men, when temptations come, contemplate these thoughts and bring such scenes to their minds, thereby escaping the tempter as well as the horrible realization.

## CHAPTER VIII

### POWER OF THE PERSONAL CHRIST

**A**T the mock trial of Jesus, before the Sanhedrin that plotted His death, Peter who stood with the servants, was recognized as one of the followers of Jesus; but fear led him to deny his Lord and Master, and he confirmed his denial with an oath. But Jesus who had warned him against his being overcome by temptation, heard that denial, and desiring to save His disciple, He turned and looked upon Peter. That look penetrated his soul; and, overcome with deep repentance, he went out and wept bitterly. He never lost the power of that look, and never again was he tempted to deny his Christ, but followed Him faithfully until he received the martyr's crown.

The consciousness of the presence of Jesus and of His anxious look upon us, should save us in the hour of temptation. When most sorely tried by temptation, look to the cross on which Christ was crucified for our sins; in imagination visualize that scene on Calvary; follow the mob that helped make up the procession as Jesus started through the streets of Jerusalem bearing His own cross until laid upon another; draw near and contemplate that great tragedy of history, for it concerns you greatly. Your eternal destiny, as well as your earthly welfare, are centered there;



look upon the face of Jesus as He is nailed to the Cross with your sins, for the world's redemption.

“Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof.” He that abides in Christ and walks in the Spirit, cannot commit these sins; just as no child, though tempted, would do certain wrongs when knowing that the eyes of his father were upon him. But what man is so debased that he would commit sin in the presence of Jesus? No man would—and it would prove a powerful safeguard to cultivate the consciousness of Christ's continual presence and our vital union with Him.

Christ foretold it all when He declared that “as Moses lifted the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth, may in Him have eternal life.” Do not these words appeal to you? Draw near to the foot of the cross on which Jesus suffers, and learn the lessons that it has for you in times of temptation. There you behold expressed, not in words only but in acts that speak louder than words, the matchless love of God—“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” “While we were yet sinners Christ died for the ungodly.”

You cannot disregard that sacrifice, for you were included in that redemptive act; and you are included in that love and all-embracing “whosoever,” unless you reject Christ and refuse to accept Him. No one can question the fact of God's boundless love, if he will come to the cross, for He spared not His own son in order to save men. When tempted to despair and to



wonder whether God cares for you and whether life is worth the conflict, then contemplate the worth of man as Christ has estimated it and written it high at the price of His own precious blood. That tells the worth of man in God's sight; and Christ previously had stated the infinite value when He placed it in the balance with the world; and we never must lower that standard nor abandon men to a life of sin as though they were not worth saving. God thought and acted differently, for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," and that reconciliation unto God was through the cross—"having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, being dead through your trespasses, did He make alive together with Him having forgiven us all our trespasses; having blotted out the bond written in ordinances, that was against us and which was contrary to us; and He hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross."

Can you prayerfully gaze upon that infinite sacrifice of God's love, and whilst having the intellectual consciousness of His presence, deliberately engage in sin? Such a vision will prove a powerful deterrent against sin; and we know of nothing else that will so effectually fortify man with a supreme and all-potent motive for resisting temptation, as the contemplation of the suffering Savior to save us from sin.

How can we look upon the face of the crucified One in His agony for us, and at the same time cherish sensual thoughts and desires, or any sinful purposes? Whilst the cross was once inseparable from shame, it is now the most revered and precious of all symbols; for it is the symbol of Christ our Savior, and the sym-

bol of our faith and redemption. Cling to Christ and you are safe. Repeat that familiar hymn until you live it:

“Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide!  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, Oh, abide with me!

“I need Thy presence every passing hour;  
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter’s power?  
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?  
Through clouds and sunshine, Oh, abide with me!

“Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
Heaven’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows  
flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!”

You and I must see Jesus when tempted to deny Him, for there is irresistible power in that look of our Savior. With the consciousness of that look upon us, we cannot plunge deliberately into sin. Keep that vision before you; for Christ liveth evermore and abides with us, though we see Him not. It may aid you to wear over your heart the symbol of Christ—a cross—and when temptations arise, press that cross and let your conscience be aroused by the presence of your Savior, who calls upon you to watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. He who stilled the tempest on the Sea of Galilee, can still the storm of passion in

your soul; for temptations lose their power when one is conscious of Christ's nearness.

We have fellowship with Christ in times of temptation, and He can sympathize with us in our conflicts—“For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy; and may find grace to help us in time of need.” The temptations of Jesus were real, and with intensity of soul, He overcame them; although it is true that He had no sinful antecedents and tendencies for evil habits such as afflict our souls. No bodily or objective presence of the evil one was necessary, and doubtless the visions of the temptations were subjective or mental as they are in our case in most instances; for we need not see the face of the tempter nor hear the voice, however potent they may be; for in the imagery and sensual incitements of the soul, we have most vivid and real temptations. There, our most terrible struggles are realized; there, is the real battle field where the forces meet in vital conflict, and where we sustain defeat, or triumph.

We live in the realm of our thoughts. In my mental imagery, I see practically all the principal things that I saw with my eyes and in many years of world-wide travel for study. We see the lives we have lived, our most intimate associates, the good and evil we have done, the battles that we have lost and won. It is true when we say “My mind to me a kingdom is,” and “that the world is his who has seen it;” for all that I have



seen is not only a part of me, but I am inseparable from it, and I would not be myself if all that I had seen were blotted out. Then all the impressions made upon me by observation would likewise be blotted out, as well as the deductions gained from them. The law of association is all that is necessary to revive the past and cause the scenes and events in my travels to pass before me with all the vivid realism of beholding them with my eyes. Suggestion brings them irresistibly before me, for they are part of my being, and they affect my intellectual and moral consciousness as well as my efficiency and happiness.

In our spiritual consciousness we rise to fellowship with God, and commune with the Father of our spirits—you cannot limit the vision and fellowship of man by any material barriers. You may confine him within prison walls—like Paul and Silas with their feet fast in the stocks; yet, like them, the spirit is not bound, but free to soar in elevated thought, in hope, faith, and love, whilst enjoying a foretaste of the heavenly joys that shall be ours in the next world.

It is the real and invisible inner man that is assailed by strong temptations, and we should grow strong moral convictions so that we may be able to overcome. It is here that it is absolutely true that every man must bear his own burden. No one can penetrate your soul and divide the temptation, but you must contend alone. Many a devoted mother would gladly join in the combat to aid her wayward child, but her moral forces cannot be transferred to the one who has abandoned himself.

The greatest and most grievous burdens of life are



not borne upon the shoulders, and they cannot be so easily thrown off as the physical burdens. The hod carrier is not so weighed down by the load that he carries upon his shoulders, as many whose hearts are almost crushed because of blasted hopes from misplaced confidence or from bitter remorse because of sin.

Jesus bids us cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for us. He bids all the sorrowing, the weary and heavy laden, to come unto Him and they shall find that peace to their soul which all need, but which the world cannot give.

Whilst we bring many of our troubles upon ourselves because of our shortcomings, there are others for which we are not responsible,—such as the afflictions that come from the loss of loved ones as well as the infirmities and disappointments of advancing years, and the base ingratitude of those we befriend, besides the many wrongs that we suffer from evil-doers. David was not the only father who wept bitterly over an ungrateful and unworthy son. The Apostle Paul recounts his long list of sufferings even from false brethren; and the Psalmist laments a similar experience when he says: “Yea mine own particular friend in whom I trusted, who did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” The supreme selfishness of many who owe so much to us, often has filled the soul with sorrow and weighed it down with grief; but do not think too much of such trouble and grow morbid. Nay, “Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee.” No matter what the burden may be, the Lord is willing and able to help you. “He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.” He

sees you and wants to help you.

There are no authentic portraits of Jesus, though we are familiar with the conventional ones of later artists; yet there are many contemporary authentic portraits of the Greek and Roman rulers of that period. We can look upon the portrait of the Emperor Tiberius under whose reign Jesus suffered death, and whose portrait Jesus saw when He asked them to show Him the tribute money; and pointing to the effigy of the Roman ruler placed upon it, He replied to the enemies who sought to entrap Him: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Looking upon a coin identical with the one that they brought to Jesus, may give vivid realism to that scene, but we need not see the Christ in the body with our eyes. The gospels are full of moral portraits of the Christ that we need for all the varied experiences of life. The faith of the disciples increased and they grew stronger after the visible presence was withdrawn from them. Then they went forth with more than imperial power to conquer the world for Christ; for they believed and felt that God was with them. Would you see God? Then get the view of Christ—for God was in Christ, and that is our nearest and clearest view of God. Jesus is no less real and near to us than He was to the Apostles. Reality is not restricted to contemporary witnesses. Time and distance do not affect the reality of Christ and the Gospels. We make a mistake in trying with one stretch to reach across the vast intervening period that connects us with the actual witnesses of Christ. Nearly nineteen centuries, or fifty-

six generations, must be traversed; and the distance to be traversed is so great, that the events seem to become hazy at times. We must not remain here and plant ourselves here in America; but we must go back in the distant past and become eye-witnesses with the disciples in the land of Palestine and stand there as our starting point; for that is history. Then after Pentecost, follow the Apostles in their preaching, listening as they gave the message to others, they to the next generation, they to the next, and so on through all the centuries. In every case they were living witnesses, and through this unbroken line of living witnesses, we may go back to the living source, Jesus Christ Himself.

Paul's remedy for every one who would escape the power of the sins of the flesh is not by an effort to eradicate the essential elements of our being, for these belong to the strongest and best Christian men; it is not by mere repression nor the extinction of passion, but by keeping them in subjection by the dominant moral virtues developed, and which should control our being. The body is not to be despised with its members, for it is God's handiwork; and our Lord and Savior assumed a natural human body, for He became incarnate—was born in the flesh (of a woman) and dwelt among men. It is not true that the body is vile, as mis-translated in the so-called authorized version, although it is often polluted by sensual indulgence.

It is not the flesh of the body, but the corrupt spiritual nature of man that is the source and seat of sin, and this Jesus designated as the heart when He spoke of it as an inner reservoir of moral impurity and



iniquity that defiles man. Every one has realized and deplored his sinful nature. Various futile endeavors have been made to eradicate it, as seen among the fakirs and more than five million religious mendicants of India. Christian ascetics have tried the solitude of the caves and of the desert. Some even have had themselves immured in damp and dark subterranean cells for life, as I saw in the famous Troitska monastery near the city of Moscow; until the better judgment of a Czar led him to suppress it. All these expedients were ineffectual, for the penitents never could escape themselves; and hence doubts and the temptations of their sinful natures, the thoughts and visions of the solicitations to sin and the unsanctified characters followed them still.

Paul's method was not that they should retire from the world, that they should emasculate or unsex themselves and cease to be human men and women—for he did not demand the impossible—but that through the influence of the Holy Spirit, they should become new creatures in Christ Jesus; or as he expresses it in the concrete: "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." There is a higher and a lower, a better and a worse self in every one of us, and we all realize the conflict between them. It is the corrupt sinful self that would tyrannize over us, but which loses its power when we dwell in the Spirit of Christ with a supreme purpose to do his will.

In our moral and intellectual consciousness, we may know our fellowship with Christ through the reign of His spirit in us, because of the dominant power in inspiring us to persist with all the moral intensity of our



being in following convictions of duty. Sin remains, but is kept in subjection instead of having dominion over us. By the term flesh, Paul does not mean the body, for he speaks of sins that have no connection with the body; but we may include all that is embraced in human nature—the mind, impulses, physical appetites, and whatever enters into conflict with the higher spiritual being. The two are so contrary in character that while you walk in the Spirit, you cannot indulge nor fulfill the lusts of the flesh any more than the man that is truly devoted to his wife will abandon her and seek out the harlot. The greater the intensity of the devotion and love for his wife, the greater will be his fidelity and security; for he would shudder at any illicit suggestion, and would abhor the degradation of an adulterous act. If God's Spirit dwells in us, then we shall not be enslaved by sin; for Christ will rule in our hearts; and as God's children, our highest ideal and purpose in life will be to do His will. This should appear to be the most normal and natural as well as the highest state of our being, just as the child should be true to his parents, and the husband true to his wife. God is our loving heavenly Father, the source of every good and perfect gift, and man only finds himself at his best when living right with God. Why should men contend that it is not natural nor possible for them to live a spiritual life and to be happy in God's service, but that it is necessary for the essential nature of some that they should be estranged from their Maker? Such a position is not in accordance with divine revelation and our conception of man's highest destiny. We want men to be free, not slaves

to any evil; but the man who commits sin is the servant of sin, and the bondage is degrading.

Far better to help men conquer in this irrepressible conflict with evil, which is possible by developing a Christian character. They must grow in grace and into a Christ-likeness, by fellowship with Him. If they abide in Christ they cannot willfully yield to inordinate lusts.

To overcome an evil tendency, we must cultivate the opposite; supplant the vice with some positive virtue; overcome the evil with good. If your boys eat green apples, give them plenty of ripe ones. If you would keep them from questionable places, make their home more attractive for them, and have their friends come and play their games in your homes, for boys will be active and it is far better to meet them in your home than in the saloon. Crowd out the bad by introducing the good, just as you expel the darkness by admitting the light. You cannot empty yourself of evil except by supplanting it with good. It is true in the moral as in the physical world, that nature abhors a vacuum. It is still true that idleness is the mother of vice, and Satan finds work for idle hands to do. We must become interested and actively engaged in some useful and honorable occupation, for to be inactive is to die. Exercise is necessary for our physical and moral well-being. The strong athlete becomes so through vigorous exercise and a strict regard for the laws of health. Each man must decide for himself whether he will be the master or the slave to his appetites; whether the lower or the higher being in him shall rule, the animal or the spiritual; he alone is the sovereign master in his

freedom of choice, and no one else can decide for him. He selects his own associates and the places that he frequents, as well as the thoughts and desires that he cherishes, and the ideals and purposes after which he aspires. "Choose ye this day, whom ye will serve." This is your privilege; for "Now is the accepted time—now is the day of your salvation."

Methods of mere negation have little to commend themselves. You cannot kill the appetites or passions that belong to human nature, but you can keep them under proper restraint, as the driver keeps the fiery steeds under his control. We must keep the mastery over the lower animal nature by keeping the spiritual in the ascendancy, and not by the attempted futile efforts of self-mortification, or extinction of the buoyancy of youth. "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but to deal justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." Or as James states it: "Pure religion and undefiled before our God and Father is this—to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

Drummond says: "I do not think that Christ ever said simply 'Let a man deny himself.' He said, 'Let a man deny himself and follow ME;' and in following Him, self-denial becomes inevitable and easy. Christ never meant a man to crush his nature. God meant for us to keep a part of everything that He put into us when He made us—not to crush and dwarf it, but to elevate it all and to use our energies with higher purposes and higher motives. These desires are energies in human nature, and you cannot annihilate them. Here is a great reservoir, there are two sluices; and if



you lift the one, the water goes away down into nothing, trickles down into the sea and is lost; if you lift the other, the water goes out—passes over a mill wheel, and does useful work. Now the energies of a man's nature can be guided in either of these directions—in that of usefulness or of uselessness, but they cannot be crushed; that method is futile. You may crush sin by an effort for a week, but it will break out again with more force than ever. You can only give the man a stronger appetite and a stronger passion; give him a more abundant life rather than a dwarfed, truncated, and crushed life. And that is what religion offers a man. It does not say, 'I am come to crush your life and dam down your energies and all your desires and passions,' but rather 'I am come to give you a larger and richer life—I am not come to destroy anything but to fulfill.' ”

He must become filled with the spirit to make the change possible—it is being born anew; and God our Father is more ready to grant the Holy Spirit to every one who asks, than parents are to give good gifts to their children, and this assurance is for every one and possible to all.



## CHAPTER IX

### MEN TEMPT THEMSELVES

**M**EN become their own tempters when they seek out places of sin and go deliberately in the way of temptation, even though they may not always have resolved to commit evil; for they presume upon their self-conceit—that they are exceptions to the moral weaklings, and that they can stand in perfect safety in the presence of temptation. They deliberately disregard the warnings of the Bible, by placing themselves in dangerous places and thereby tempt themselves to sin; or as Shakespeare cogently states it:

“Sometimes we are devils to ourselves,  
When we will tempt the frailty of our powers,  
Presuming on their changeful potency.”

When men approach so near to the temptation, then their conscience is led captive and silenced, and their will-power is enfeebled; for sound judgment is paralyzed. They cease to reason as free moral agents, because they have allowed themselves to become mastered by the indulgence of sinful desires in lusting after the forbidden fruit.

We all have seen the helpless struggles of the fly, exhausting itself when once entrapped in the spider's

web and finally overcome by the secret enemy that had enticed it. How the wary trout that cautiously hesitates but finally is emboldened to make the plunge and grasp the tempting bait, struggles in vain for freedom from the snare. Thus it ever has been with men, who in spite of the mournful experience of others, have gone in the way of temptation. Far "better shun the bait than struggle in the snare" as Dryden expressed it.

It is not from ignorance nor accident that men stumble into the pitfalls of vice, for they see the lurid red lights burning and these should serve as a warning instead of a guidance for them to follow. Every patron of vice will tell you that "the way of the transgressor is hard," and that "fools only make a mock at sin."

The writer of the *Book of Proverbs* warns the reader against the perilous devices of the strange and evil woman; for the adulteress and harlot destroy by their seductions. "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk upon hot coals, and his feet not be scorched?" Still "as an ox goeth to slaughter," thus fools go to their shame and destruction when led captive by the vile woman, through the blandishments that conceal the inevitable consequences of evil doing; for it is still true as when the *First Psalm* was written: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers. . . . But the way of the wicked shall perish."

Inasmuch as we are ashamed of the deeds of the wicked and shudder at the inevitable fruits of vice,

therefore we should consistently avoid all places of temptation. Stronger men than we have gone down, and the mere presumption as to our superior strength is no safeguard. South puts the caution well: "He who has no mind to trade with the devil, should be so wise as to keep from his shop."

Had David kept at a safe distance, then his life never would have been blackened by one of the foul crimes of history. Had he with the first vision and suggestion of evil, turned suddenly away in horror at the thought of immorality; and, like Joseph, said with a firm resolve "how can I do this evil and sin against my God"—then he would have escaped the terrible shame and remorse of a lifetime. That was his critical moment. Then he might have exercised his moral freedom of choice, and saved himself from the awful sin and crime that besmirched his hitherto unblemished character and led to his eternal disgrace.

James tells in unmistakable words the philosophy and secret workings of the power of temptation when he states that "each man is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own lust. Then the lust, when it had conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death."

Temptations in multitudinous forms assail every human soul, but not always the same particular ones; for many escape those that become powerful temptations to others. We inherit different temperaments, we are born with certain marked dispositions and tendencies which are in striking contrast even with other members of the same family, and we are not so susceptible to similar temptations for there must be a de-



cided response within us to the bait offered, or else it becomes no enticement. What tempts the depraved moral leper is repellent and loathsome to the spiritual-minded who can walk safely by saloons and places of vice, whilst others would be strongly tempted to enter. The enticement is conditioned upon the inner state of the man himself. There must be a response within ourselves to the inducement offered, and that depends wholly upon our moral tendency. We view the low dives with abhorrence; but strange to say, they seem to offer strong inducements that tempt some men to leave the home of their devoted wife and children; for their souls have become debased by cherishing lascivious thoughts and indulgence in shameful vice. This strange perversion is true of all intemperate and immoral men for they debased themselves.

We must not try to shift responsibility, and blame God for our condition when once enslaved by sin; for God tempts no man to evil. He has endowed us with reason, conscience, and power of will to resist temptation. Besides, he counsels, pleads, warns, and holds forth the greatest possible inducements; but if men turn from Him and follow the tempter until bound by strong habits, they must blame themselves alone for their ruin. They knew better than they did, and they were able to do far better than they did, had they done as Christ enjoined them to do. He wanted to save them, as when He prayed for Peter that his faith might not fail him; but they heeded not His warnings nor His gracious pleadings.



## CHAPTER X

### NECESSITY OF SELF-DENIAL

**S**ELF-DENIAL and self-restraint mean self-mastery; and they are absolutely necessary for our highest good as individuals, as well as for the public welfare. Unrestrained self-indulgence means public anarchy and individual slavery. Every slave to evil habits is a living witness to this statement. Unless man denies his appetites, he brings himself into bondage. This is an all-important truth that we should recognize and keep ever before us; for the tendency of the young especially is to dislike restrictions; and even some older ones protest against the restraints imposed by the law, for they say that it interferes with our personal liberty—and we are in a free country, where a man can do as he pleases. But such license not only would lead to anarchy and subversion of all human rights, but to the worst kind of bondage and the final loss of all personal freedom.

Jesus declared that “Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin;” but “ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Herein we have a supreme motive for seeking the truth as it is in Jesus—for no one would be a slave, but a free man. I know that this is not in accord with what some men think; for they object to Christianity because of its restraints.

and find fault with the Ten Commandments because of their "Thou shalt not," for they would not be bound by any law but would be free.

In my years of personal experience and extended observation in world-wide travel, I never met nor even heard of a genuine stalwart Christian who regretted personal sacrifice he had been obliged to make because he first had sought the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and had tried to live a Christian life. I never met nor heard of one who lamented the fact that from his youth he had lived a moral and upright life, instead of fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, hating his neighbors and watching an opportunity to defraud them. I never met nor heard of a father or mother who sorrowed because their children were faithful followers of Christ; but there are many thousands of broken-hearted fathers and mothers who have mourned bitterly because their sons and daughters had cast off all moral restraint, and wasted their lives in riotous living.

In visiting many of the great prisons of the world, I did not see nor hear of a single criminal being sent there because he had practised the teachings of Christ. I witnessed many sad and mournful scenes among the prisoners, but Christianity did not furnish a single convict; for Christian living enslaves no one; it sends no man, woman, or child behind the bars; it binds no one with chains, but brings him into the highest and happiest liberty. In that vast army of the most deplorable and shameful wrecks of humanity, the self-pauperized and degraded drunkards and morally depraved adulterers, Christianity did not furnish a single recruit; and if all had lived faithful Christian lives,

there would not be one drunkard, nor one bad man or woman in the world. Then what suffering, what poverty, shame and remorse would have been escaped by those who suffered the anguish of soul, because of the terrible slavery of sin? When they threw off restraint, they lost their freedom, and no one envies them their portion. We cannot imagine a sadder bondage, for they have been shorn of their boasted powers and rights of personal liberty to do as they pleased in indulging their appetites. Had an enemy enslaved them with such a horrible bondage, he would be execrated by all as an inhuman monster. Who ever wronged the home, the wife, mother, and children so much as do the unfaithful and sin-depraved husband, father, and son? Were a stranger to commit such an outrageous wrong against one of them, that same enemy of his own family would curse and destroy him. But the fact that he is the husband and father or son, does not exempt him from responsibility in bringing poverty, sorrow, and shame upon members of his own household whom he was morally bound by every obligation to honor and protect. He has thrown off all moral restraint; but no one admires such a weakling, nor thinks that he is free.

John B. Gough, the famous temperance lecturer, told me how he had been a slave to drink, and the terrible struggle he had when he had resolved to reform; for he had for years lost his freedom, and was under the slavery of drink. But with an indomitable will, and by looking ever to Jesus as the author and finisher of his faith, and clinging to him as his Savior,—he triumphed. When he recovered the liberty that he had



surrendered, he never spoke of his sacrifice because he practised denial to attain to self-mastery, but always thanked God for the highest and most precious liberty that he had been able to enjoy in Christian experience and living. Do not be tempted to defer or to decline fellowship with Christ and His church under the misapprehension that it means a sort of asceticism or a synonymn for mere self-abnegation; and a belief, or affectation of belief, that the buoyant spirit must be crushed, and that all amusements or games (however innocent and beautiful) must be abandoned as incompatible with Christian character.

As an antidote to such an erroneous impression, I would call your attention to the life of one of the most keenly intellectual, moral and deeply spiritual leaders among thinkers and students in universities. His name has become a synonymn of abiding faith and fellowship with Jesus, so that you may see something of the daily joys and spirit of a stalwart Christian whose highest life was hid with Christ in God. I refer to Henry Drummond, of whom his intimate friend, Dr. George Adam Smith wrote of this modern and real saint, that he was a "graceful and well-dressed gentleman, tall and lithe, with a swing in his walk and a brightness in his face, who seemed to carry no cares, and to know neither presumption nor timidity. You spoke and found him keen for a hundred interests. He fished, he shot, he skated as few can, he played cricket and he could go any distance to see a fire or a football match. He had a new story, a new puzzle, or a new joke every time you met him. If it was a child's party, they clamored for his sleight-of-hand." That is a true portrait



of this brilliant, consecrated man of God, with a scientific mind, hating sin, and loving righteousness. He had no sympathy with pious, hypocritical cant, for he was a sincere and manly Christian. Does not that life attract you and make you see that it is possible for you to get all the best things out of this life whilst maintaining a Christian character and living in the love of God? Read his booklet on *Love, the Greatest Thing in the World*, and you will be convinced. Everywhere he became a centre of attraction for Christ by his buoyant spirit, loving heart, brilliant mind, and beautiful Christian character. There was no selfishness; he was interested in the highest interests of all men.

Drummond, like every thoughtful Christian, realized that godliness was profitable unto all things, having the promise of the "life that now is and of the life that is to come." That ought to be sufficient commendation for its recommendation and practice; for we are living in a practical age when business men are asking "What is it worth? Will the investment or the venture pay? Is it worth while?" These are familiar questions that we frequently hear; but some men seem to think that our religion has no special, or at least important, practical worth during life until nearly the close. A little reflection will show that it is a conserver of health, happiness, peace of mind and conscience, character, self-respect, money, happy and honorable homes, with all that makes life worth the living. The Christian is not commanded to abstain from anything that would minister to his highest good; and it is a gross delusion to suppose that the wicked enjoy the best things of this

life, just as though our heavenly Father were less considerate for His faithful children than Satan is for his servants. God declares that every good and every perfect gift comes from Him, and that He giveth us richly, all things to enjoy. And "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

The restrictions are all for our highest good, and this can be attained only by right living. We cannot enjoy good health unless we conform to certain requirements; and the health physician publishes a number of don'ts at stated periods. No one objects for we have learned that they are necessary for good health; and men will do anything to recover health and prolong life, however careless they once may have been; for they begin to realize the worth of them. The state has its prohibitions and all must respect them; and nothing is right for the non-church-goer that is forbidden the church member. We should not think merely of the restrictions as though there were no positive blessings that we were permitted to enjoy; for Eve made a grievous mistake in placing her emphasis on the former. It is because of the wisdom and great love of the mother for her child that she forbids whatever would endanger the greatest welfare of that child. Often we murmured when our parents denied us something that we longed for; but later in life we felt grateful because they did what was best; and the same is true in reference to the ways of our all-wise and all-loving heavenly Father who often withholds the particular thing for which we plead, in order that he may give us something better. Many a child has been spoiled by indulgence.

So far as Christian living imposes certain duties to-

ward our fellow man, we all know that love is fundamental in Christianity; not only in its origin but in its propagation. It was because God so loved humanity that He sent His own Son to save the world; and it was the love of Christ that constrained all His followers to spread the Gospel of good news; for love always wants to do good unto others, as every mother knows. There is also a law of rich compensation in the activity of love. The miser gets the least returns from his money; and in like manner the selfish soul gets the least out of this life. God gives no encouragement nor reward for selfishness; but a life of loving service finds the greatest satisfaction.



## CHAPTER XI

### TEMPTATIONS TO DISHONESTY

PARENTS should be impressed with their rare opportunity and corresponding responsibility to teach their children the importance of little things—the bricks make the building and the units make the millions. The young tell what they would do if they were great and rich, but they overlook the way to their greatness. They are not willing to economize time and money, and give careful attention to detail even in the smallest things, and by which men become great. If they are not faithful in little things, they could not be entrusted with great things. When young they are growing tendencies and developing moral forces that will determine their character and possibilities for future usefulness and efficiency, and make them the men that they are to be.

The repeated prevarications, the little acts of dishonesty that were carefully concealed by being oft repeated, grew into the greater ones. It was the trifling with conscience and better judgment, and the first moral indiscretion, that were the beginning of the deplorable end—just as the first social glass was taken without any serious thought as to its consequences. We must not overlook the tendencies of our deeds, nor despise the day of small things; but make the most of



life, however humble our station may be. Teach the children that they should improve the opportunities that they have for doing good, though limited—they can speak the kind word to the few; they can endeavor to influence their associates for good; and they can give them an example, as well as their own households. We must not restrict the meaning of temptation to certain unmentionable and loathsome vices—the shameful sins of the flesh—for many who are free from these, leading respectable lives and occupying positions of honor—whether in the Church or out of it—they know, who have fallen into other temptations to sin and have been enslaved by them. Pope in his *Essay on Man* wrote forcibly and truly that “An honest man is the noblest work of God.” We understand the use of that word *honest* in the broadest and most comprehensive sense. Jesus expressed the truth when he said “Render therefore unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.” In spite of this moral standard we find that it is utterly disregarded, even in high places. Political graft, or translated into plain English, wholesale robbery of the public treasury by representative officials, whether employed by state, county or city—has been a common crime and characteristic scandal of our country. They would despise the pickpocket or ordinary burglar, but unfortunately they seem not to despise themselves for stealing from the public treasury. They would put other thieves behind the bars whilst refusing to take their place with them. They are not noble men, for they are neither honest with God nor with the state. All the thieves are not in jail; for an astounding discovery

was made several years ago when several different states made a careful examination of the scales and measures used in thousands of grocery stores, and found that nearly fifty per cent of them were fraudulent. It was a sad revelation as to the number of thieves that never had been even suspected of dishonesty. I saw thousands of the scales that had been used by grocers to defraud the customers by giving them short weight—and the same was true of the measures employed, and through which more than one hundred million dollars were lost annually by the consumers. They were not troubled by the denunciation of the Almighty that “A false balance is an abomination to Jehovah.” The Prophet Amos utters divine judgment against the men who make the measures small and deal with balances of deceit. No man can expect God’s blessing upon such dishonest practices. In many cases the grocers did not know that the measures were under size, as they testified.

Men are continually selling themselves for money, as though it were the *summum bonum*—the chief end of life. The prevalence of dishonesty; the selling of public interests, and thereby robbing the treasury and the taking of graft by prominent officials, is the common scandal that every right-minded citizen deplures. Many are notorious for their dishonesty, and never pay an honest debt if they can escape it. Although they are cultured and refined of manners, they have no scruples of conscience in matters of dollars and cents. Jesus would not turn stones into bread even to satisfy His hunger; but they will do anything that seems safe to convert worthless stock and false prom-

ises into money. Occasionally they go too far, and are sent to prison for obtaining money under false pretence. Perhaps it would be more correct to refer to them as examples of total depravity, and place them in the class designated by sociologists, as moral degenerates—instead of the subjects of temptation. They will misrepresent, counterfeit, and adulterate any food, whatever its effect upon the consumer—maybe in order to get money. No wonder that Paul declared that “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil,” for men and women have sold their virtue and all that is best and noblest in us, for money.

When we speak of temptation to sin, we must not restrict it merely to the vices that are associated with our physical natures, and overlook the many grievous sins that had their genesis in man’s mental state. I refer to that long catalogue of wickedness that has cursed humanity, and which has been responsible for the most lurid and shocking pages of history. Not only was the famous gunpowder plot of England hatched in the mind of man, but all the horrible conspiracies, the murders and wholesale massacres of history, as well as religious wars; and the dreadful punishment that noble men and women suffered in prisons and dungeons, and of whom the world was not worthy; for their only crime was in claiming liberty to be true to the divine-given inalienable right to follow the dictates of their own enlightened conscience.

It is a sad fact that man has committed the greatest wrong against himself. An enemy can impugn his motives, malign his character, rob him of his money by deceit, and even kill the body; but the man may choose



low ideals and base purposes, debase his moral character and destroy not only his body but himself, by his wicked deeds. We need not illustrate, for all are familiar with well-known examples. But I would correct an erroneous impression that we often hear expressed, when it is said of some modern prodigal son that "he was his own worst enemy, and only did the greatest harm to himself," for he did great harm to others also—the innocent members of his family become involved in his wasted life; for he not only pauperizes them, but leaves them the legacy of sorrow, and the memory of his shame. It is ever true that no man liveth unto himself nor dieth unto himself, for no one is isolated, but related to others.

It is evident that the chief aim, purpose and meaning of life, vary with different individuals. Not only do their circumstances differ but also their conceptions as to the meaning of life. Their ideals and motives are not the same, but differ widely. The child cares most for its playthings, but when it becomes a man, it puts away its childish things. Many grown people, however, seem to be as mistaken as the child with reference to things most to be desired, and most conducive to a life of complete satisfaction. As an illustration: I recently met in a bank the driver of an express company's wagon just as he was delivering to the cashier a large package of United States notes. In reply to my question, he said: "If I had all that money, I would never do a stroke of work, but would enjoy myself." I replied: "You do not mean that; for then you would lead a most unworthy, selfish and unsatisfactory life, and in the end you would become disgusted with life and die



long before your time. No life brings such rich and happy returns as the life of faithful service." He changed his tone, and acknowledged that I was right—and that he would "stick to his honest job."

Every man should endeavor to make the most of life by developing himself into the most efficient and best manhood. This can come only from the strenuous exercise of the best powers within us, and by doing good unto others according to our opportunities; for the measure of our responsibility is determined by our opportunity. No man need fail in his faithful endeavor, though he may not succeed in the attainment of all for which he strives; but he forms his own character which is the real man and stamps him for what he is in his own consciousness and as God sees and knows him—however he may be able to disguise himself as an actor at times, so as not to betray himself to the public.

## CHAPTER XII

### YOU CANNOT ESCAPE FROM YOURSELF

**Y**OU and I are ourselves, however we may appear to others and wherever we may be; and we are not some one else. If we take the night train in Syracuse and sleep until we reach New York in the morning, the porter need not tell us who we are when he awakens us, for we know that we are ourselves. Had an accident occurred and suddenly sent us into the unseen and eternal world, we would have awakened there instead and it would not have been necessary for any one to inform us of our identity; for we still would have been ourselves, whether on earth or in heaven.

In view of this fact, I need not try to persuade you that every man should do everything in his power to make himself one of the best and most self-respecting men possible, for he never can escape from himself. Man may ignore and ostracize his disagreeable neighbors and the undesirable citizens with whom he would be ashamed to associate, and he may be very choice in the selection of his companions; but there is one exception in this process of elimination, and it is the most intimate and vital one, for the man cannot get away from himself. He may refuse to recognize his next door neighbor and close the door against him,

but he cannot get away from himself—with that man he must associate hourly. He must meditate with him, eat and drink with him, sleep with him, live and grow old with him, die with him and be at one with him throughout eternity. In view of this fact, we should examine ourselves with the earnest desire to see in what relation we are living with God and with humanity, and know what kind of man we are making of ourselves. Are you growing to be the best possible companion for an eternal fellowship; or are you ashamed of yourself and are you making yourself intolerable and your own worst enemy? Who would live with the vile libertine, the profane blasphemer, the drunkard, thief or murderer? But all these fallen men and women must live in the most intimate and inseparable relationship with themselves.

This was the terrible thought that oppressed me when I visited the great prisons,—passed through the corridors, and on either side saw the prisoners in their cells. I never can escape the impressions made upon me when on several occasions I spoke to an audience of one thousand men; and afterwards with the superintendent, walked through the long corridors that we might see some of the effect made upon the unfortunate inmates. We saw many reading the Bible and others kneeling alone in prayer; for there is hope for the prisoner who turns to God with his whole heart. In the large prison at San Luis Potosi, I saw on a Sunday afternoon among the vast number of prisoners, some forty men who had committed murder. They were all in the open square with the sky overhead, and they mingled freely together, for the high walls and strong



guards at the main gate, made all escape impossible. They wore no labels nor distinctive dress to indicate the nature of the crime they had committed, but each one knew, and at the appointed signal, he returned to his own cell. The murderer went to his own place, for the blood of the murdered man cried out against him, and the mental image of the dreadful crime was ever before his eyes, and he saw the blood stains upon his soul. He could no more remove them than he could blot out his memory. There was no transference of his guilt or moral consciousness—either in this life or the life to come. He may have evaded the law and escaped the detective for a time by flight or by concealing himself from the public, but he never succeeded in escaping from his crime, for his sin found him out immediately after he had committed it. Our personal identity remains unaffected by any outward disguise or changed location. It was an awful spectacle as I contemplated the mental state of the guilty murderer alone with himself. What a horrible world he was living in—within the realm of his own thoughts. He may have suffered in the depths of his soul, all that is expressed in the brief sentence “Myself am hell!”

We are ourselves and not some one else. Our real self does not consist in the bodily appearance, but in that hidden and inner man of the heart. We are the aggregation or result of all our antecedents, for each day brings additional experiences, impressions, and deeds, so that we are not just the same that we were yesterday, though the outward appearance may seem to be the same. To-day as we gaze upon the royal mummies of Egypt, and especially upon the Pharaoh

of the Exodus—by the exercise of our imagination and with the background of history, we easily can visualize that memorable scene recorded in the Book of Exodus, when Moses with Aaron, in obedience to the command of God, appeared before the ruler of Egypt and appealed to him to allow the children of Israel to go. There lay before me the mortal remains of that famous character of history. I saw the same eyes that once were turned toward Moses and Aaron; and the same lips that once moved as the haughty monarch replied thus to their entreaty: “Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto his voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah; and moreover, I will not let Israel go.” I had vivid and realistic impressions of that momentous event in Israel’s history, as I gazed intently upon that rigid face and the fixed lips that once spoke the haughty words that would set at naught the will of the Almighty. And yet that embalmed body was not the Pharaoh himself. He who once dwelt in that tenement of clay and who decided against the appeal of God’s messengers, long since had gone out into the spirit world; and that dried body that had lain in the tomb for more than thirty centuries, no longer was any vital part of him. That Pharaoh who once ruled and moved and had his being in Egypt, was still the same man in his intellectual, moral, and spiritual being although unseen; for he still continues inseparable from his works during his earthly career, and conscience ever keeps him with his real self; for character is the man, and there is no escape from this abiding reality.

Nothing is more real and imperative than conscience. It is as universal as humanity; and has exercised its

dominant power over all races of mankind, the most uncivilized as well as the most cultured and from the earliest dawn of history. It is an innate and an ever present witness that God is near and that He has something to do with us, that we cannot escape Him; for He exercises authority over us through our moral consciousness, and there is no escape by flight from this ineradicable witness of self-condemnation. Cicero declared that "Conscience pervades all minds, and this law cannot be annulled or overruled; no Senate can loose us from it; no jurist can explain it away. It is not one law at Athens, and another at Rome; one at present and another hereafter; but one law perpetual and immutable." The exceptions may be accounted for, and they are not so radical as some have supposed, although the conscience has at times been shaped and warped into strange acts and crimes by religious education.

In years of travel around the world, we find the most diverse people—differing greatly in their intellectual, social, and religious condition; yet the very lowest of them are under the dominion of conscience. I am fully aware that there are certain practices among certain tribes that are shocking to our ideas of morality and which would be criminal in any country where Christian civilization prevails; but those startling vagaries of immorality are due to their religious customs, inherited from the past.—In other words, the vulgar ignorance and lack of civilizing influences; for conscience does not furnish knowledge and education, but approves or disapproves the correctness of our motives and conduct.



Whilst the moral faculty is innate and not merely the result of education, it will have its influence upon certain expressions of conscience. Many of these have been furnished by the extravagance of the various systems of asceticism that have prevailed at times in the history of the Christian Church. In the famous monastery of Troitska near Moscow, I visited the subterranean cells in which deluded Christian men once had themselves immured—walled in from the world, from the sunshine of heaven, to spend their shortened selfish life in these damp-dark cells and in the bowels of the earth, because they became persuaded that God willed it; and thereby, alone, they could save their own soul, though the rest of the world might perish. It was a morbid self-delusion—an abnormal mental state, though the fanatic was conscientious. A wiser and more sane man than the head of that monastery, in the person of the Czar, became shocked at the horrible delusion of self-immolation in the name of Christianity, and he ordered every monk to be removed and that the cells should be cleared. That horrible delusion was the result of a morbid mind being allowed to misinterpret the Gospels of Christ, and the Church should not have sanctioned it.

We have another illustration of a thief who stole meat on Holy Thursday, but whose religious scruples would not allow him to eat it on Good Friday, although he was hungry. These are only perversions, and show the importance of testing and adjusting our conscience in accordance with the infallible standard of God's word; for even the zealous Paul made the dreadful mistake in thinking that he was doing God's service

when persecuting Christian men and women. The mistake has been repeated too frequently.

That Divine Word is the only rule and guide for our faith and practice, and not our mental hallucinations, feelings, prejudices, nor hate. This does not mean to limit the power of conscience, for it is God's own representative judge in man, and that verdict is final. No supreme court on earth can reverse it. No jury can affect it, whether they render a verdict of guilty or not guilty; for if conscience condemns the man as guilty, they cannot acquit a guilty conscience. The result of a law-suit may depend on the witnesses, or on the superior skill of the lawyer on the winning side; but the guilty man, though acquitted by the jury, knows that he is not innocent; for conscience cannot be bribed nor argued out of court by the ablest lawyer. It is the supreme judge from which no appeal can be taken; for it speaks with final authority, and refuses to be silenced though it denounces us for wrong doing. The strong may threaten and silence the accuser, and nations may censor the press in time of war and suppress unfavorable facts; but there is no human power nor national authority that can exercise censorship over the conscience. We have abundant evidence in the conscience money returned to the Treasury Department; and in the many unknown criminals who, driven by conscience, voluntarily confessed their guilt, and surrendered themselves to the penalty of the law. Many have been filled with remorse and given up their ill-gotten gain—who, like Judas, bargained for the thirty pieces of silver; but later in agony of conscience, returned the accursed graft with the la-

mentable confession: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." Shakespeare knew the potency of this invisible judge, when he wrote: "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." Men, like Pharaoh and Herod, may dull their conscience by sin; but in case of the desperately hardened evil-doer, there are times when it stings them like a scorpion; for, as South says: "No man ever offended his own conscience, but first or last it was revenged upon him for it."

Conscience is the safeguard for every man, as well as for the state. Without it anarchy and pandemonium would reign, life would be intolerable, and man would destroy himself. It is not only a powerful deterrent against evil, but it makes man an ally with the Almighty; and with heroic courage of conviction, he stands by his moral convictions in defiance of all threats and opposition. It enabled Peter and the Apostles to stand firm and preach Christ though imprisoned and warned by the high priests and the leaders of the Sadducees; and in reply to the threats of their enemies in authority—they returned the bold challenge "We must obey God rather than man." It was the irresistible potency of the conscience as God's deputy and searchlight in the soul that made them feel that they were the messengers commissioned of God; and they went forth like immortals, with invincible faith, preaching the Christ as the world's only Savior.

Our moral consciousness is supremely personal, and either approves the moral character of our conduct or lashes us with the retribution of remorse, for conscience



passes judgment upon the quality of our actions and our moral obligations. Whilst the universal voice of conscience is not infallible, since it is influenced by education and prejudice, it is the most infallible guide that we have when tested by the standard of God's Word. We need not go astray except in judgment. All people realize the existence of the moral law within them and, at times, the conflict between the contending motives that divide them in following the ought or the ought not is severe. We may illustrate this by the story of the Indian who bought a pound of tobacco into which the storekeeper by accident had dropped a half shilling piece. Reaching home, the Indian was happy when he found the silver coin and he retired, congratulating himself upon his good fortune. But sleep went from him, for through the entire night he said that two men within him kept up such a constant argument that he could not sleep. The one said he had a right to keep the money and no one would be the wiser, but the other insisted that he must return it to the rightful owner. The continual wrangling made him very unhappy and, as soon as it was dawn, he hastened back to the store and gave it to the owner who thanked him for his honesty. Then he returned home with his accustomed peace of mind. There is no peace to the wicked. We must do what we believe to be our moral obligation. The will must heed and execute or carry out the monitions of conscience, for conscience makes duty plain, but does not compel us to act against our free will. Every individual enjoys that high prerogative of making his own choice and no one can prevent him from making that choice, for the

exercise of the freedom of the will belongs to him alone. Others may tempt and influence him in his choice so as to deter him from subsequent acts, but the final choice is his alone with an untrammelled will.

You are growing yourself and you are deciding what manner of man you are to be. Your own conduct can determine that, for in order to be, you must do. You cannot be learned, efficient, generous, a useful and honorable member of society, unless you do something. Attainment or successful achievement can come only from earnest endeavor and devoted service. We cannot inherit these as wealth is often inherited, but we must labor faithfully and do certain things, as well as refrain from doing certain things. Many things are sold in the market but there are priceless attainments reached by the poorest, and these no wealth can buy. Many of our greatest and most honored men have come from humble parentage. There is no caste system in our country. God is no respecter of persons. You are selecting your associates as you select your reading. You decide where and how you spend your evenings, and in all these things you are determining the character and kind of man that you are to be. We can never change the past nor live it over again and undo the wrongs: nor can we ever recover or receive an additional day for all the years that we have wasted.

## CHAPTER XIII

### WILL POWER

**M**ORE attention should be given to the fundamental importance and proper development of the will power; for the moral conviction loses strength when will power is weak and inoperative. There are many people who do not intend to sink into a life of infamy, for they despise it; but they are weak and like the weather vane, they are turned about easily by every influence. They are not the strong, stalwart, and reliable men in the community and church, but the poor weaklings who give us trouble. They should cultivate will power and strong moral convictions, and say with a firm resolve: "I will not yield to evil; but I will be true to duty and to God." No man does a wrong deed until his will yields the decision. The will makes the surrender and we must not overlook the moral responsibility. No one can force that will to a surrender. God Himself does not compel man to decide against his will. He reasons with man as His own child, and tries to win him by the power of His love as He entreats him, saying, "Son, give me thine heart." He knows that once He has the heart, He will have the whole man. This is God's method, who so loved the world that He made the boundless sacrifice; because love is the greatest power



in the world. It brought God from heaven to earth; for God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and it draws men up to God as Christ foretold. Without love, society and state would be impossible—the home would not be worth the having, and no church would be worthy of the name; for without love, man would cease to be Christian. Christ entreats, He warns and presents the strongest reasons for being His faithful sons and daughters; but He will not break man's will, and compel him to yield against his will.

The freedom of the will is man's highest prerogative, but it also involves man's greatest responsibility. He can resist all the entreaties of his heavenly Father just as he can spurn those of his father and mother. Yea, he can defy the will of the Almighty, and plunge into vice and become his own destroyer. Like the high priest of old who rejected Jesus for Barabbas, men and women still turn from Him to the companions and haunts of iniquity. How touching is that picture of Jesus, given in the Book of Revelation! "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." He could not do more for man's salvation than He has done; and He is ever striving with man; for "it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure;" but He does not compel. In that vast army of Christian workers around the world, I did not see one who had been forced into that service against his or her will. All were volunteers; and no drafting nor conscription is necessary in God's service where all are constrained by the power of His love. On the

Yangtze, we met Dr. Rijnhardt on her way back to the forbidden country Tibet, where her only child had died several years before, and where soon after, her husband had been murdered. She had returned to America to recuperate, and was going back to her field of labor, with no companion, but sustained by the overmastering consciousness that Christ was leading her.

The character of the will stamps the character of the man. The burglar in his cell is committing no outward evil, for his body is under restraint; but his will is free and may be unchanged in character, and only waiting an opportunity for its exercise. The prison is necessary for the protection of the public against evil-doers, but it has been an acknowledged failure so far as reformation of character is concerned; for two-thirds of all the convicts return to prison again, and it is not the institution where the best citizenship is developed. Whilst no man ever was forced to sin against his will, in a like manner no man ever was compelled to be virtuous against his will. The character was in the choice, desire, and purpose, though the deed was not yet committed; just as Jesus spoke of those who committed adultery in their hearts.

The will is supreme in man; and by its exercise, man makes the most practical tests in human experience. This is true in the physical, social, moral, intellectual, and religious realm. We must will to do, to learn, to travel, to experiment. Faith enters into the affairs of our daily life; for it is true that "we walk by faith and not by sight." "O taste and see that Jehovah is good; blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him."

Every man by the exercise of his will can make a personal test of this statement; or he may decline to do so. Jesus says to the wayward: "Ye will not come unto Me that ye might have life." To the doubter and disputer He gives the bold challenge to make the test for themselves, in these significant words "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of Myself." Christ's proposition is reasonable and philosophical, and men should make the practical test so that they may know. You cannot know any fact of science or history, until you will to know it by applying the necessary test. You either must will to investigate for yourself as a scientist, or else will to listen to an acknowledged authority, or read the conclusions of science. You must will to do certain things if you would learn history. The archeologist and explorer must will to leave home and travel far away to the special fields for investigation. Neither indifference nor denial would give information.

The same is true in the realm of religion. We cannot know Christ, the Bible, and Christianity, unless we will that we will devote ourselves seriously to the study of them. Some will, that they will not believe in Christ as the Savior of man. They refuse absolutely to make the practical test that Jesus offers. He entreats them in those wonderful words when He spake as no man ever spake, and which every one can test for himself: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for My yoke



is easy and My burden is light.” Here by your own mental process you can will to make the test, by willing to do what Jesus invites you to do, and with that faithful exercise of will power will come the satisfying conviction that Jesus promises. Your happiness and salvation are dependent upon your willing to do as He enjoins; for even the Savior of the world cannot save you against your will. Your mental attitude must be in harmony with Him; and your personal will alone can make your co-operation effectual in fellowship with Christ. There might be an abundance of food to supply our physical wants, but unless we willed to take and eat, we would starve and death would be inevitable. The same is true of the spiritual and eternal life. Jesus says: “Take eat—this is My body which is given for you.” “I am the bread which came down from heaven—of which if a man eat, he shall live forever.” Every man wills either to obey or to disobey. He wills to accept or he wills to reject Christ.

The sovereignty of the will was imperative in the three Hebrew children, when they replied to the threat of the Eastern potentate: “O Nebuchednezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace; and He will deliver us from out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.” There was a firm and uncompromising assertion of finality of the moral and religious conviction, whatever the consequences might be. We are responsible for

fidelity to duty and God, but not for results. We must obey God though men may tempt and threaten us. Jesus recognized the power and moral responsibility of the will, when he said: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." He was ready to submit to that practical test of the will, but not to blind prejudice and inactivity. There was no hope for the restoration of the Prodigal Son until with indomitable purpose of will, he said: "I will arise and go unto my father." The exercise of that will lifted him from a life of degradation and brought him home to his father.

This exercise of will power may involve strenuous thinking; and you must realize the situation—that all is at stake and dependent upon your immediate course of action. No sluggish, dreamy thinking can be tolerated for a moment. You must act aright and at once, or all is lost. It may require a firm venture of faith, but the circumstances require it. You may recall the infamous conspiracy of Haman in plotting through Ahasuerus, the destruction of all the Jews in his kingdom, and how Mordecai appealed to Esther the queen to go to the king and implore him to spare her people. She realized the grave peril in daring to appear before the ruler without his order, for it meant death in case she should not gain his favor. But the appalling crisis moved her to dare to follow her convictions of duty for her doomed people, and hence she replied: "I will go unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish!" She willed to do her duty, and her people were saved from

the threatened destruction.

God has endowed man with reason and the moral faculty that distinguishes between good and evil; and men fall, not because of ignorance but temptation. While our sinful natures incline us to evil, we are free to choose and act; because the supremacy of the will power is our right and sure defence until we voluntarily surrender it. Whether temptation comes through the eye or visions of the imagination, or evil suggestions and desires through indulgence in sin, the man stands until he wills to yield to what he knows to be wrong; for God speaks through his conscience. Thus, this sovereign ruler in man may be dethroned by hardening of the heart; for no sin committed stands alone, but renders us susceptible to other sins, each additional one bearing us farther away and making resistance more difficult—hence the warning; for we are responsible for the evil habits that we grow, and the fruits thereof.

There has been a tendency, on the part of many, to excuse wrongdoing, because of the law of heredity and environment. Whilst much depends upon these recognized influences, they have been greatly overestimated; for multitudes have attained to eminence and nobility of character in spite of the most adverse conditions of birth and surroundings. On the other hand, untold numbers with the best ancestry and environment, have gone down in moral shipwreck and shame. God is no respecter of persons; but loves all and seeks their highest good by making a strong personal appeal through the conscience. They make the decision just as the child that rejects the appeals of a loving father



and chooses companions among the wicked; for he casts his own die—with a free hand and not by compulsion. There is a growing and dangerous tendency to claim that these basely immoral evil-doers are insane; but they are shrewd in the ways of evil, so as to escape the penalty of the law, and they know what they are doing. It might be nearer the truth and safer to say that by a life of sin, they have become morally insane and have lost all sense of shame and compunction of conscience.

Some would excuse themselves by saying that they did the best they could, but were hedged in and beset by the peculiar circumstances that made a better life impossible; but no thoughtful man would seek to justify himself before God with such a claim that is at direct variance with God's word. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." In the face of such plain teaching you cannot say that you did your best, when you yielded to temptation. God is pledged to help you, and with His superadded grace you may overcome the severest conflict. "I can do all things through Him that strengtheneth me," and this assurance will be your realization, if faithful. The way to victory is in the immediate obedience to the divine will; for if you dally with the temptation, as the child plays with the fire, then you may become shorn of your power of resistance and be overcome by sin. Be not a thing like the

weather vane—the sport of every passing breeze; but remember that you are a child of God though you may be a very unworthy one, and you can will to rise to fellowship with Him.

Man is responsible for his own moral character. He could not determine the character of his parents and early environment and the inherent weakness; for man is born with sinful tendencies, dispositions, and temperaments that tend downward. But he is not bound by them as an automaton; because he is endowed with reason, conscience, and self-determining will whereby he may suppress for the time, or control, the temptations to sin. Our moral character is not something inherited, but is the result of our own self-determining will put into action and developed by a series of personal acts of conduct that we ourselves have chosen to perform; and by this choice, have grown to become what we are. This character was determined by the free exercise of our will and not forced upon us; because it has been said well that character is a completely fashioned will, and consists—as far as it is good—in right choice. In conscience we have an uncompromising and imperative moral conviction of duty that points out the way; but the will of man is the motive power and decides the action. Hence we suffer self-condemnation and remorse after we have sinned; for we know that we might have willed to act differently.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SELF-MURDER

WE are often shocked as we read of that terrible crime of self-murder, or suicide. We are appalled at the ever-increasing number. Is there no remedy, and shall the suicidal craze continue without raising a voice of protest? Should not public opinion express itself in strong words of condemnation instead of apologizing for it as some unavoidable weakness or case of temporary insanity without moral responsibility? Unquestionably some were insane, for no sane righteous man would destroy himself; but I refer to that class of suicides who by unrighteous living became involved in shame, or so utterly disgusted with their unsatisfactory lives of sin and disobedience, that in desperation, they finally yielded to the base motives that had controlled them for years, and ended their careers by committing that awful crime against God and society by murdering themselves.

The universal desire for life and the efforts to prolong it, are evidence that the suicidal tendency that impels some men to destroy themselves is most unnatural, being contrary to the normal state of mankind. Hence the impulse that leads to self-destruction must be due to some abnormal temporary state of the mind, some peculiar psychological condition, or else



how could man commit that horrible act which is so contrary to reason, conscience, and the universal sentiment of man in his struggles for life? True, when at the critical moment that he is overmastered by the impulse to destroy himself, then the desire to live has ceased to assert itself, for the morbid tendency is in control. Men at such a stage need a friend with a strong mind to arouse the moral consciousness into action. The fault is in his indulging vain thoughts that there is nothing to live for and in his failure to realize the character of the shocking crime that he is contemplating. Men will make any sacrifice to prolong life and nothing could be more unnatural than for a sane man to cut short his own life. Such men must change their philosophy of life and get the divine meaning of life and live their life hid with Christ in God.

This mournful tragedy, like all sin, is due to supreme selfishness; for the suicide ignores his highest duty to others, even the rights and welfare of his own family, as if indifferent as to how his deed will affect their happiness. He may say that his trouble is too great to bear because of sad reverses and the consequent mental suffering, but that is a mean and cowardly attitude for a man, a husband, and a father. How shall the faithful wife bear it all alone; and in addition thereto, the terrible shame, loneliness, and sorrow of bereavement that his contemplated act will bring upon her who was in no way responsible for the trouble that he brought upon himself.

From my experience with some would-be suicides whom I rescued from their horrible purpose, and from what I have learned concerning some who committed

the deed, I feel persuaded that could I have been with them when tempted to commit the act, I could have saved them from their taking off. They needed to have their minds turned to a different angle—to see things from another viewpoint and to have their moral conviction aroused to feel the enormity of the crime contemplated and all that it involved for time and eternity. They are not their own; they belong to others whom they are bound to serve, and they are responsible for their influence. They belong to God, in His likeness they were created, and they dare not destroy that divine image by an act of self-destruction.

Could such men see themselves as others will see them, they would shrink in horror from the temptation. Let him who entertains such a foul purpose, pause for a moment and visualize the scene of his postmortem suicidal act, and that horrible spectacle will not attract him. Let him look into the faces of the friends who stand about him, and he will appear so contemptible in that contemplated tragedy that he would hide his face from them, and never would he commit that shocking crime of self-murder. Let him study the sorrowful features of his loved ones whom he would wrong as no other man could wrong them; and let him try to read their thoughts and feel their sorrows and shame, and then he will suffer such a hell of remorse that he will assert his manhood and banish the wicked thoughts that he had cherished until they almost had overcome him.

When such suggestions come, realize the danger and banish them at once by the firm assertion of the consciousness of Christ's presence, who sees us and knows

our thoughts and stands ready to deliver us. But we must suppress the evil suggestions at once before they get us in their remorseless grip. Direct your thoughts to your loving heavenly Father, for "we are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." In every mental, moral, and spiritual conflict, remember that Christ is no absent nor indifferent spectator; but He is near, and able and willing to save us. Let those who are dissatisfied, learn the secret of their trouble, change their philosophy of life, accept Christ and His Gospel of good news, and their life will be changed. God has not cast us off, but on the contrary gives us this assurance of love: "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters." With the consciousness of His presence, temptations would lose their attractiveness and they would fail to overcome us. He who is for us is mightier than all the forces against us, and His grace is ever sufficient for us; but we must keep ourselves in right relation to Him, to feel His power.



## CHAPTER XV

### THE POWER OF PRAYER

**A** LIFE of prayer is all important; and Jesus enjoined its necessity upon his disciples when he said: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." In the brief prayer that he taught us all to pray, he gave the petition "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil." We pray that he would so lead us that either we may escape temptation, or else be able to overcome it.

Prayer, whether silent or audible, is our mental and spiritual attitude by which we make our approach to the Supreme God, our heavenly Father, and express the feelings, the needs, the convictions, the faith, and repentance of the soul, to Him who looketh into the secret chamber of the heart, and rewards us accordingly. It is a most real and intimate intercourse between the inner hidden man of the heart, and the unseen God. Two persons are involved and both are interested,—the petitioner and the hearer of prayer. He may not give you just what you ask for; but, if sincere, he always will give you a blessing, though not a material one. Men always have prayed, and always will continue to do so; for man realizes his helplessness and sinful condition, and hence, in his innermost soul, he reaches out and seeks help and forgiveness

from Him who speaks through our moral convictions, and who once came in Christ to save all men. Distance and invisibility are no barriers to the mind; for we can think of friends and visualize them, though a thousand miles away; and in our minds see them as clearly and love them as truly as if living in an adjacent street; and the same is true of Christ, whom not having seen we love, and feel the constraining power of his love.

Man as a religious being, feels the necessity of prayer, and in his extremity instinctively cries out to God for relief: "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee must all flesh come. My heart and my strength faileth, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." Man can pray anywhere and always, for it does not consist in posture of the body; but in the mental and spiritual attitude of the soul toward God. The Apostle Paul, through years of strenuous experience, realized its practical importance; and this is what he enjoins upon us: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God; and the peace of God that passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus." That is a wonderful assurance. It seems almost too good to be true; but Paul knew what he was saying; for he had made the thorough test. It was his personal corroboration of the truth that Christ promised when he said to his disciples: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that

knocketh, it shall be opened. Or what man is there among you, who if his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone; or if he shall ask for a fish, will give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"

We know that there are dark days and trying experiences when God withholds things for which we pray; and seems to give us a stone instead of a loaf; but things are not always as they seem; and Christ has warned us not to judge according to the appearance, but to judge rightly and not before the time. We must believe and follow him in the dark, though we cannot see the hand that leads us, nor the reason why; but let God be his own interpreter; and in time we shall see that all was for the best. A mother told me that when her little boy was nigh unto death, she prayed God that if he loved her, He must spare her child. Years later when that son was serving a term in prison, she confessed her mistake and how she would have mistaken the goodness of God, had her boy not recovered. The brothers of Joseph meant it for evil when they sold him into Egypt; but God intended it for good, and we must not seek to interpret God's providences; for we cannot understand the relation of present experiences and purposes in the divine plan for the eternal life.

We do not pray to instruct God, as though He needed information, nor to remind Him as though He had forgotten us, nor to attempt to persuade Him against His will. Nay, rather we pray to become more



Christlike and conformed to His will, by seeing ourselves as we are before God, making confession of sin with true repentance, and resolved to lead better lives. "Thy will be done," must be the underlying spirit, breathed through every prayer; for we would have Him reign in us. Often our greatest needs are spiritual and moral, and of vastly more importance to us than any material thing; and we are helped like the child in a heart-to-heart talk with its father.

Christ encourages us to come to Him with whatever concerns us. He does not limit us; for this fellowship and conversation with God is what we all need; and in this intimate communion with Him, He will supply our needs. Do not think of Him as afar off in the heavens, seated upon a throne that we cannot approach; for in God we live and move and have our being. He taught us the divine immanence; for Christ abides in us and we in Him; and He influences our thought and life.

When I was a boy I learned from astronomy the vast distance of the planets from the earth, and then I imagined God's throne beyond the most distant world—so far away that it was difficult to conceive how such a ruler could see and hear us frail beings when we pray; but my conception of God was an erroneous one, and I did not get near Him. Lyman Abbott has well said "That the spirit of man can hold communion with the invisible Spirit of God, and from such communion receive comfort, counsel, strength, peace and joy, is attested to by so many and so various witnesses—that it can be doubted only by doubting the veracity of the human conviction, which is the basis of knowledge. The

experience of inspiration derived from communion with God is more universal than the experience of inspiration derived either from art or from music. The testimony to the reality of friendship with God is probably nearly as universal as the testimony to the reality and value of human friendship.”

Abbott quotes from Matthew Arnold: “If they ask, ‘How are we to verify that there rules an enduring Power—not ourselves—which makes for righteousness?’ We may answer at once: ‘Just as you verify that fire burns—by experience. It is so; try it; every case of conduct of that which is more than three-fourths of your own life and of the life of all mankind, will prove it to you.’” Test it for yourself.

## CHAPTER XVI

### SILENCE TEMPTATION BY QUOTING THE BIBLE

**T**HE Bible is a final help, since the tempted must appeal to the Word of God. This was the infallible source from which Jesus drew the reply that put the tempter to flight. Thrice he replied with an apt quotation from the Scriptures that completely silenced the evil one, and that is an example for us. Store your mind with choice passages from God's Word; for preparedness is necessary—and then use them promptly when occasion arises, and stand by them. You need not be afraid to take God at His word. He has not promised more than He is able and willing to fulfill. There is great inherent power in that Word; for the same Holy Spirit who inspired it, also accompanies it with his potent influence; and Christ is inseparable from the most precious promises contained in it. Jesus spoke of the regenerating power of the indwelling of that divine Word, when he said to his disciples: "Already ye are clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye except ye abide in me. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and



that your joy may be made full." This generous promise makes Christ's words attractive and worthy to be treasured in our hearts. In order to realize this joy, his words must abide in us; for we must live them and desire to be influenced by them. If we live our life in harmony with Christ, then we will not pray Him for anything that would be contrary to his purpose, but will submit our wishes so far as they may be in accordance with His holy will. Here we must place the emphasis where the limitation is clearly expressed in the promise; for no one need suppose that Christ would work contradictions or grant anything contrary to His wisdom and love in His divine government for all men. Our life must be lived with Christ in God; and then we will not be so much disturbed about the answers to our prayers. It is sad that so many should be so ignorant as to the contents of the Bible. No wonder that they are weak, helpless and cast down when trouble comes; for they do not fill their minds with the rich and precious promises. They do not avail themselves of the proffered help, and heed not the exhortation of Paul, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." The Bible is no Blue Book. Read it and become convinced of the truth, that Christ declared that these truths would make their joy full.

We may rightly infer the positive value in repeating some appropriate passage from God's Word, when severely tried; for every one knows the potency of a thought in arousing or changing our feelings, and how much more potent is a word or promise when spoken by our Saviour? We know the effect of His words upon His disciples.

Paul suffered severely from some physical ailment, and he besought the Lord thrice to remove it; and he would have continued to pray for its removal, but God gave him the gracious answer: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Those were precious words, and they sustained the Apostle through life, even unto martyrdom. We should ever treasure these words; for when the worst comes and we can do no more, we have the divine assurance that He will sustain us by His grace. Sickness will come and the sorrows of bereavement; and finally God will call us home; but through all these trials, His grace will be sufficient for us.

I am not unmindful of the intellectual difficulties that tempt men at times to disbelieve the divine record, but the difficulties encountered by unbelief are greater. If God is love and our heavenly Father, then He must have shown His love by doing all that He could for man's redemption, even at the greatest sacrifice; for love always expresses itself in deeds. What sacrifices a mother will make for her child—even for a very unworthy one; but if an imperfect mother will do so much for one child, is it unreasonable that God our heavenly Father should have made the great sacrifice, to save the world of humanity? God always loved; and He took the initiative by sending His own Son; and the method that He adopted in His wisdom and love, does not seem impossible nor unreasonable when we recognize man in his rightful place as a child of God, though fallen into sin; for he was originally created in God's own image. God came in Christ as the necessary response to the universal cry of the human

soul, as expressed by the Apostle Philip: "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." God must reveal Himself through a person. There is world-wide power in the personal Christ—since the Greeks first came to the disciples with their anxious inquiry: "Sir, we would see Jesus."

When tempted to doubt God and His word, concerning His being manifested through Christ to redeem fallen humanity, we must go to His Word, and let God speak to us for Himself. No one has been so misunderstood and misrepresented as God, our heavenly Father; and not only by the unbeliever but by His own professed followers. Some have made Him responsible for all their afflictions—for pestilence, fire and sword; for the most ardent persecutors in the wars of religion found their warrant for the bloody slaughter in the Scriptures that they perverted. In fact they had grossly false conceptions of God, as a being who found pleasure in the suffering of mankind, and hence they practised all manner of worse than pagan tortures of their own bodies; and the flagellants went mad in their excesses, to scourge their bared backs with a lash, to which small pieces of sharp iron were attached, until the blood streamed over their lacerated bodies. The Church, in places, went so far astray in its interpretation of the being of God, that the state intervened to prevent the shocking practices. Science had not discovered the laws of sanitation; and hence God was made the agent for all manner of sickness. Those were the days of a horribly gloomy Christianity, when their conceptions of Christ were often a caricature—when they sought to please him by



torturing the body with haircloth; and when asceticism flourished in its most repellant forms.

The little children would never have been attracted to that severe type of Jesus; and He would not have attended the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee. Our loving heavenly Father and Savior take no pleasure in such self-inflicted suffering. It is not the anger of God and the lack of His love, that cause typhoid fever, cholera, and the bubonic plague; but the disregard of the laws of sanitation. In like manner, sin is the great troubler. It is all-important to have true conceptions of God; for we need a God of love who pities, forgives, and cares for us. We would not live if we were persuaded that no one cared for us—not even God Himself. But God does care for us; and He has urged us to cast all our care upon Him, because He cares for us. When in trouble or danger, we may be tempted to cry out like the disciples when tempest-tossed: “Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?”

I had a vivid impression of that memorable night; for, during my third visit, I took the little steamer on a clear day when the sea was without a ripple, and we turned North toward Capernaum. Within fifteen minutes, we were caught by a violent gale and there was great excitement. Terror was in the faces of many, and never was I so frightened at sea; for the boat was small and I knew not how great the danger might be. The crew gave me no information, but all was hurry and confusion as they endeavored to remove the awning that caught the gale and threatened our safety. Suddenly the captain rushed from the wheel and quickly cut the cords that the crew tried to untie. We

were drenched, and longed for the shore. That frightful experience gave me a most vivid and realistic impression of the sudden storm that came upon the disciples when they called out to Jesus to rescue them from the impending danger that seemed to threaten their lives. Overcome by fear, they failed to trust Him and they cried out to Him: "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" No wonder that after He had stilled the storm, He said unto them: "Why are ye so fearful? Have ye not yet faith?" He had undertaken the greatest sacrifice for them and would even go to the cross for them; and hence, with such proof that Christ did care for them, how inexcusable was their doubt!

We have in addition the accumulated evidence of all the Christian centuries—with the testimonies of the twice born, who are living examples that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation; and hence we should have faith, and not doubt the supremacy of Christ. Because you do not understand and are unable to explain some things contained in the Bible, this should in no way lessen the value and effectiveness of what you do understand and believe. Hold firmly to these, and practise the Christian truths and duties that are so plain that no one need question them, however unlearned he may be. The blind son whose sight Jesus restored, was unable to answer all the questions that the Jewish Sanhedrin asked him concerning Jesus, and how He had healed him; but that did not disturb his faith in Jesus as a divine healer, for that rested upon the evidence of personal experience with Jesus.

Hence to the wicked Pharisees who sought to destroy the influence of Christ, the young man replied with a clear and strong conviction to their false insinuations: "Whether He is a sinner, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I can see." He had all the evidence that was necessary, and he demanded no further proof. Of all the evidences urged in behalf of the Christian religion, none are so absolutely soul-satisfying as the evidence from personal experience. It is personal conviction based upon knowledge gained from experience. No argument can disturb it. It is what we know from self-consciousness—the basis of all knowledge. We need not be troubled about things that we do not know; for we know enough to save us without being perplexed about the story of Jonah and the whale or where Cain got his wife. These are not the questions of supreme importance, and such as affect the fundamental, moral, and saving truths of the Christian religion.

We not only encounter mystery in the Bible, but everywhere. Not only is God a spirit invisible, but man also; for the inner and real man is as invisible as God, and we can know him only from the expression of his thoughts, feelings, and conduct. The life is also invisible and a mystery. All the scientists of the world have not been able to make one grain of wheat that will grow. They may reproduce one that is so identical in form as to deceive the ordinary observer; but plant it, and you will find that it will not germinate; for it lacks the germ of life that God alone can give—He alone can make the seed that will grow.

I would correct a very common false impression that



is ever being repeated in public addresses—that the wheat taken from the ancient tombs of Egypt, where it had been buried for several thousand years, will when planted in Egypt, grow and yield a harvest. This is a mistake. Such wheat will not and never has grown when sown; for many centuries ago, the life in the wheat perished. The duration in every seed is limited; and I often have been assured by the greatest Egyptologists, including Maspero in the Cairo museum, that no wheat taken from an ancient Egyptian tomb will grow; and yet men continue repeating this erroneous impression. It is similar to some of the unfortunate impressions respecting the teachings of the Bible; for they are the result of a false interpretation; and the Bible has been made responsible for some of the strangest vagaries of the human mind, and most extravagant practices in the name of religion.

When tempted to unbelief because of the intellectual difficulties of belief, remember that there is no escape in doubt; for unbelief cannot provide a solution for the intellectual difficulties that confront us when we turn from Christian faith, but the difficulties increase. If we believe in an almighty, all-wise, and all-loving God, then it is reasonable as well as possible that God should have come in Christ to reconcile the world unto Himself. We cannot deny the possibility of the Incarnation, nor declare it unreasonable when we consider the sacrifice that a mother will make for one child, and often a very unworthy one. I never shall forget the look of agony that I saw in the face of the mother in the Palais Justice in Paris, when she fell at the feet of her son who had been condemned to death. It was her

child, though in terrible disgrace; and her love made her oblivious to the surroundings. But will not the all-loving God, our heavenly Father make an infinitely greater sacrifice to save the millions of His children who were estranged from Him, and ruined by sin?

God must reveal Himself to man in Christ as a personal Savior, and thereby meet the universal longing of the human soul, as expressed by Philip when he said to Jesus: "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus saith unto him: "Have I been so long time with you and doest thou not know Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." Would you see and know God? Then look into the face of Jesus, who manifested the sympathy, the forgiveness, and boundless love of God. That is the nearest and clearest view of God; for God "was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." But some hesitate when they read the Gospel account of the supernatural birth of Jesus; but His entire life was full of the supernatural. He foretold His death and resurrection in most explicit terms, to His disciples on the way to Jerusalem; and He also gave the challenge to His enemies, that they never forgot, when He said to them: "Destroy this body, and in three days I will raise it up again." The words made a profound impression upon them, and they remembered the challenge when His dead body was lying in the tomb; for they went to Pilate and told him so, in order that the tomb might be securely guarded; for they must prevent His rising from the dead, as He had declared that He would—or even the semblance of a coming to life—and hence they must see to it that His dead body could not be

removed from the tomb; and the Roman governor gave them full authority to make it secure.

But no human power could prevent Christ from triumphing over death, and coming forth from the sealed and guarded tomb, alive again, as He had foretold—and He appeared unto many. Hence it is not strange that the supernatural has been associated with the birth of Jesus. Dr. Briggs was one of the most cautious scholars, and his skepticism led the Presbyterian Assembly to depose him from the ministry; and yet Dr. Briggs found no difficulty with the Incarnation. He wrote that: “Christian scholars as a body are not at all dubious as to the Virgin Birth. Biblical and historical scholars are just as decided in its maintenance as the dogmatic theologians. They cannot possibly recognize that the birth of Christ was by ordinary human generation.—It would turn back the dial of Christianity two thousand years; it would break with historic Christianity and its Apostolic foundation, and imperil Christianity itself.”

When tempted to lose faith in God’s goodness and loving care, then turn and look unto “Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising shame; and hath sat down at the right hand of God. For consider Him that hath endured such gainsaying of sinners against Himself, that ye wax not weary, fainting in your souls. Ye have not resisted unto blood” as Jesus did.

Never did defeat seem more certain than when the teachings and works of Jesus culminated in His most cruel and shameful death on the cross. It was the hour



of triumph for His enemies, who for weeks had conspired for His death. Now they were exceeding bold as they stood about the cross and flung defiance in His face, mocking Him with the challenge to come down from the cross and they would believe on Him—although they would not have believed on Him, for many of them refused to believe on Him even when He arose from the dead. Graetz, the Jewish historian, writes in his history of the Jews that Jesus is “the only mortal of whom one can say without exaggeration that His death was more effective than His life. Golgotha became to the civilized world a new Sinai.” Graetz, as a historian, should have given the philosophy for this unique fact of history; for he could have found the reason in the words of Jesus Himself, when He said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself.” It is the attractive power of that matchless sacrifice which showed the boundless love of God and transformed the despised cross into the most precious and hallowed symbol of Christendom. But had Christ not risen from the dead, as He foretold, then the hopes of the disciples would forever have been nailed to the despised cross, and buried in the tomb.

It is the risen and ever-living Christ that made His death on the cross so marvelously effective. It was the overpowering mastery of the risen Christ that filled His disciples with impassioned love, and sent them forth like the immortals with more than imperial power, to conquer the world for Christ.

Once the haughty and enraged Pharisees, with withering scorn, silenced the father of the boy whom Jesus

had healed. In contempt they replied to the father: "Are ye also led astray? Hath any of the rulers believed on Him—or of the Pharisees?" They said it with a defiant challenge, for it was true then; but how differently subsequent history has answered them; for the greatest rulers of the world bow at the feet of Jesus and acknowledge him as the King of kings, and the Lord of all. Even the great apostle to the Gentiles would no longer write: "For behold your calling—that not many mighty, not many noble are called." To-day are found in the Church of Christ the leading royal families, the greatest rulers, distinguished statesmen, judges, educators, scientists, philanthropists, reformers and the leaders in every department of human endeavor for the social and religious betterment of mankind. Even the Jews have seen that Pilate was more than right when he dictated the inscription for the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews," and that he was justified in refusing to change it when their fathers protested; for it appeared that Jesus was really a king, not only of the Jews, but he became King of the Roman Empire and of the greatest nations on earth. When the chief priests threatened the Roman governor that if he released Jesus he was not Cæsar's friend, Pilate yielded against all his convictions of justice, for he feared the will of the mob and the power of the Emperor Tiberius at Rome, who was the supreme potentate of earth at the time; but to-day no one is influenced by that name, whilst hundreds of millions acknowledge Christ Jesus as their Lord and Master.

## CHAPTER XVII

### OUR TRIALS

**T**HE trials of life are many and varied. Whilst no one can hope to escape them all, we often become responsible for many that we bring upon ourselves through our own folly and indiscretion. Many suffer and complain of hard times and insufficient income whilst they ape the rich instead of living within their means. It would be far better to avoid the installment plan, to pay as they go, to be honest and happy, than pretend to be what they are not. The installment plan has proved a curse to many and has led them into temptation that made them bankrupt, dishonest, and unhappy through their extravagant living of superficial and unreal lives. Some earnings should be put in the bank for a rainy day, but no working man can afford to put it in the saloon. If you cannot live on a little less than your income when able to work, how will you live when out of work? Plain living, with right thinking, would bring health and happiness, and "Godliness with contentment is great gain." We make ourselves miserable by envying the portion of others, and not trying to make the most of our situation and opportunity. Instead of fretting our lives away with envy and making ourselves, as well as our friends, miserable by our follies in high living, it would be infi-



nitely wiser and better to avoid useless extravagance and to use more common sense, for often it will go much farther than dollars. It is very expensive to ape the ways of the rich. Why buy crackers put up in fancy packages at the rate of thirty cents a pound when you can get equal food value in bulk for fifteen cents a pound? Recognize the worth of what you can save, for much goes to waste in the kitchens of the poor. It takes good sense and efficiency to economize in preparing a good meal, and good sense and efficiency go farther than dollars. It is the lack of these qualities that causes so much poverty. Ignorance is a great waster and stupidity can neither economize nor cook a good meal—even with abundance.

There is much delusion as to the high cost of living in our country and the cheapness of living in Europe. The fact is that the necessaries of life cost more in France, Germany, and Great Britain—before the war—than in the United States, and the conditions of living on the same amount were decidedly better in our country. Fuel, meat, flour, vegetables, and fruit cost us less. There is no country where men get so much money for their labor and where they can get so much for their money as in the United States. They get much more pay for service and they live much better than the laboring class in Europe. That is why more than a million foreigners come to our country in a single year. It was because they could live much better in the United States than they could in their own country. Unfortunately, with greatly increased pay, some of them adopt the extravagant ways of the Americans, for they are not satisfied to live the life of self-denial

that characterized their homes in Europe. By the necessities of life I do not include intoxicating drinks, and yet the most careful estimate has placed the amount of money expended annually in our country for liquor at the enormous sum of more than one and a half billion dollars, besides sending to prison eighty per cent of its inmates. The money spent for tobacco exceeds one billion dollars, and tobacco is not one of the necessities of life. What an astounding waste without gain, but at the unspeakable sacrifice of health, happiness, and the many comforts of life. Surely the working class cannot afford to contribute their earnings to this terrible waste of strong drink, but they do, and having worse than wasted their money, they strike for higher pay and raise the cry of hard times! But who made them? They have not learned the worth of what we save. What a tremendous gain it would be if, instead of making their daily contribution to the saloon, they were to deposit in the savings bank and take out a life insurance policy so that the family would not be left in want in case of accident. Not only does drink affect the health whilst wasting the earnings, but it increases the liability to accident and finally becomes a barrier against life insurance protection. Dr. E. L. Fiske, an authority on vital statistics and hygiene, declares that "The application of a person suspected of being seriously tainted with liquor is never knowingly accepted in standard forms of insurance by any company."

We often would do well to take a careful inventory of all that we are and have; not merely our possessions in real estate and personal property, but of our

own individual character, our faults and vices—as well as our virtues—our opportunities and what we have done with them: whether we are satisfied with our own accounting, or whether we shall not determine to turn over a new leaf and do better. We must decide for ourselves, for we have not done our best, but have at times been our own worst enemies.

“Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment,” is a divine precaution that we would do well to observe, for we often are mistaken in our judgments. Things are not always what they seem. Even the human face often is but a disguise of the inner man and it is because of this false guise and pretext in speech that we are deceived so easily. We have a striking example of erroneous judgment in the days of the prophet Malachi, for when the faithful ones suffered from grievous trials and saw the temporary prosperity of the wicked, they were tempted to lose faith in God’s justice as they muttered their complaints that seemed justified by the inequalities of the people: “It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before Jehovah of hosts? and now we call the proud, happy; yea, they that work wickedness are built up; yea, they tempt God and escape.” They saw not the end when all would be reversed; when the proud and wicked would be as stubble, and the faithful no longer suffer from the scourge of their enemies.

There is this insidious temptation that comes to many when suffering severe trials: “If God is Almighty and our Heavenly Father and loves us as his children,



why then, does he not come to our relief when suffering wrongs? Why does he permit sin to enter the world; why does he allow sin to overcome us and evil-doers to tempt and to wrong us?" It is the old and familiar challenge that Satan put to Jesus when he hungered in the wilderness: "If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." Thrice did the tempter challenge Jesus to give supernatural proof of his divine claims, but He yielded not to the plausible argument.

Many still wonder why God does not compel men to believe, and some wish that He would force the doubter and indifferent one to assent by overwhelming them with some irresistible influence. Jesus was challenged by the evil one to give some startling exhibition of His superhuman power in Jerusalem that would bring the will of the beholders into subjection and leave no possibility of doubt. But Jesus would not confound His adversaries by overawing their disbelief by some spectacular display of divine power and compel their faith and obedience against their will. God never coerces a man against his will and reason, for such a subjection of the will would be a violation of human freedom and by leaving no free and untrammelled exercise of the will, there would be no moral character in our actions. If freedom of thought were stifled, man would be disfranchised, and without unrestrained freedom of choice, our conduct would be determined for us. God employs no force but He reasons with us and wins us by the power of His love, for His followers are not slaves, but free, and He wants their loving hearts for service. He says: "Come, let us reason together:" "Son, give me

thine heart:" "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." But He never will force an entrance, nor paralyze the human will into subjection. That is not the divine method and when overzealous bigots in the church resorted to persecution, they departed from the teachings and spirit of our divine Master, who said: "He that will, let him take the water of life freely." The human will is our highest prerogative, and since God respects its rights, no man has a right to violate its prerogatives by employing force, for might does not make right, or else there would be no ethical standard, but it would be variable according to the changing circumstances that brought the different parties into power.

When in the minority, right has not always been able to assert itself so as to receive justice, but often has been sentenced to the stake by misguided and cruel men in power, since there have been times when righteous men were powerless to vindicate their rights because of the peculiar circumstances, and the verdict of those in authority was that justice had triumphed, although it had been trampled in the dust.

When Jesus had been nailed to the cross, His enemies—with boastful defiance—hurled the challenge against Him: "If Thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross. . . . Let Him now come down from the cross and we will believe on Him." He could not accept the challenge, for it would have defeated the supreme purpose for which He came into the world: "to save sinners," and that way led to the cross, and

He could not abandon his mission and thereby frustrate the will of Him who sent him. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life." They said, "He saved others," and that was true, but he would save all men by the sacrifice of Himself, and therefore He could not save Himself by coming down from the cross. Christ foresaw it all long before he reached Calvary, and He foretold the world-wide attractive power of the cross through the centuries when He said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself." That suffering and death on the cross is the hope of humanity, and no symbol is so precious in meaning, and so sacred to Christendom as the cross, for it tells of God's boundless love and man's redemption.

We must not blame the Lord for the evil doings of men, nor say that human history has been made such as it has been by the will of God. Human beings must not be looked upon merely as so many automatons, and all the doings of mankind in which all men are actively engaged merely as a sort of Punch and Judy show on a world-wide scale and without any individual choice, but each one responding to the irresistible will of the Supreme Superintendent. If such were the case, then we might make the Almighty responsible for all the wrongs and crimes committed against the innocent and for the appalling slaughter of the European War. These were not caused by the will of God, but by the will of selfish and wicked men. Had they followed the teachings and spirit of Christ, then the world would have been spared the unspeakable calamity



of this most unnatural, unreasonable, mad, and disastrous war of all history, for it has not one redeeming or justifiable feature, and all the possible good that may result from it might easily have been accomplished without this shocking destruction of life and property.

We must not exaggerate our trials, nor minimize and lose sight of the blessings that remain. We may be suffering from sickness or the infirmities of old age, and our time on earth may be short, but then we must contemplate the blessed eternal inheritance that awaits us, and where neither sickness, pain, nor sorrow can affect us. We often should bring that heavenly home into view and contemplate its uninterrupted joys when suffering most from the trials of this earthly life.

We must not interpret the character and ways of God, for no one has been so misunderstood and so misrepresented as God, our heavenly Father. Many have attributed their terrible afflictions to His anger, instead of viewing Him in His loving attitude, and with infinite love and mercy, ready to sustain and comfort through the eternal Spirit. But they lose sight of the true God, and convert Him into an enemy who has caused all their trouble, and they repeat the lamentation of the prophet of old: "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is brought upon me, wherewith Jehovah afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." We must not make God responsible for the sins of men, for the wrongs that they have done us, nor blame Him for the misfortunes that we have brought upon ourselves, for often our troubles would be much more grievous had it not been for the gracious influence of our loving God, who checked us by his ap-

peals through our conscience. It is true that even at our best, it is "Of the grace of God I am what I am." Matters would have been much worse without His sovereign care. He never forsook us, even when we turned from Him, and often we were restrained by the echo of His voice through our conscience.

There are many experiences that try men's souls, and it is not strange that we at times should be sorely perplexed by the many dark and trying problems of our lives that we cannot reconcile with God's loving care. But we must not try to explain mysterious providences, for no man can, and we only make matters worse, and the difficulties greater, in addition to misrepresenting God, our heavenly Father, who sees us in our relation to the eternal future and with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. He does not inspire the evil doer with designs against us, though He does not prevent it, but when even the worst calamities threaten to overwhelm us, then He will sustain and comfort us until we reach the haven of heavenly rest.

Joseph knew that his brothers were against him and that Potiphar's wife sought to corrupt and destroy him, but he maintained his integrity, though it caused him to languish in prison for the infamous wrongs of another. But he despaired not, and he was convinced that God was with him and, in due time, he was delivered from prison and exalted to a place of honor and great responsibility in the government of Egypt.

Hagar felt sure, after she had been cast out of her home with her child, that her name must perish, and that Ishmael would die in the desert. With a sad heart

of despair, she turned away her face and wept. But God saw otherwise and he changed her mind when his angel called out of heaven unto her and said: "What aileth thee, Hagar?" He pointed out the way of hope and escape, and she started upon the journey that made a history.

Many have been tried severely by meeting with some great disappointment on the very threshold of life, and some have failed in the encounter, but others despaired not, and with faith and indomitable perseverance, they succeeded. I will mention a few conspicuous examples of those who triumphed over great difficulties. Rev. Dr. George Matheson was a brilliant student when in Glasgow University and carried off the distinguished honors. His future was bright because of his superior intellectual powers and oratorical ability that would ensure him leadership in the pulpit of his country. Unfortunately his eyes had been affected from early childhood by an internal inflammation, and in spite of this handicap in his studies, he won the prizes and graduated with honor at the early age of twenty, but he then became totally blind. That calamity seemed totally to eclipse his brilliant career, and many would have abandoned all hope and lost faith in God, but this young man was filled with the spirit of Christ and the love of God, and in his soul he saw Him who was invisible. His faith did not fail him, and a few months after graduating in the University he entered the Divinity Hall, and in due time graduated in theology, entered the ministry, and besides being an author, he became the greatest preacher in Scotland. He was greatly assisted in his work by his devoted sister, for



he never married. He is the author of the precious hymn:

“O Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee!  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow,  
May richer, fuller, be.

“O Cross that liftest up my head,  
I dare not ask to fly from Thee!  
I lay in dust, life’s glory dead,  
And from the ground there blossoms red  
Life that shall endless be.”

Who can estimate the influence for good that this blind preacher and author exerted? This hymn alone is sufficient to immortalize him, and many who have been blessed by it, thank heaven for this consecrated life. How great the loss had he yielded to despondency and done nothing because he could not see. There have been other eminent blind preachers and hymn writers. Fanny J. Crosby wrote eight thousand hymns, and through the singing of her hymns, thousands have been led to see Jesus by the eye of faith. She was blind, but she, too, saw him who is invisible and no wonder she wrote that precious hymn: *Safe in the Arms of Jesus*.

Prescott and Parkman suffered from defective eyes that often gave them excruciating pain, but they persevered and acquired national and international renown as historians. They summoned all their will power,

and pursued their purpose amid disappointment and pain, and their noble achievements made the world richer and placed us all under lasting gratitude. Lofty ideals and supreme motives to achieve a noble purpose have enabled men to triumph over almost insurmountable difficulties and the men who never tried are responsible for their wasted lives.

We easily fail in our estimate of the relative prosperity of men because of our lack of knowledge as to the real blessings of life, and our tendency to place fictitious values to certain semblances of prosperity which consist in ephemeral appearances only. Instinctively people place a great value upon wealth as though it were the *sine qua non*, and in order to get money, some are tempted to sacrifice themselves, though with bitter regrets they learn later that personal honor and happiness were given for the exchange. Then all realize their disastrous mistake as—with bitter remorse—they suffer the terrible penalty of dishonesty.

Wealth is not a synonym for all else. Its purchasing power is limited, as well as the soul satisfaction that it can give, and people are greatly mistaken when they think that just because a man is rich "he has all that heart and soul can wish." Wealth cannot secure youth, beauty and health when gone, nor can it buy learning, efficiency, moral character, self respect, peace of mind, an approving conscience—the highest joys possible in this life—and the hope of the life to come. "The candle of the wicked shall be put out." The tables shall then be turned.

The wicked do not get the most even out of this life, and it is false to say that man cannot succeed in busi-

ness by honest methods, as though righteous business men were doomed to pauperism. Business men do not fail because they were honest but because of peculiar circumstances that arose, or because they lacked efficiency and business sagacity. Many poor men have become rich because of their keen business discernment, economy, and strict adherence to scrupulous principles, and not by fraudulent methods. They knew what and when to buy, what to manufacture and where to invest their money. They bought real estate that made them rich, whilst another, lacking foresight, invested in property that made him poor. It was not because the successful investor was less pious than the unsuccessful one, but because he was fortunate enough to buy property in the right locality. Every mine prospector does not strike a gold mine; the great majority fail, but not because of their moral character. So it is in the commercial world, for like inventive genius, shrewdness or foresight in business seems to be instinctive in some, and absent in others. It is a native endowment—well cultivated—and there is no more sin in succeeding than there is virtue in pauperism. We must use the gifts that God has given us, but not abuse them.

On the other hand, we are not to despise wealth, for it is a power for good as well as for evil, but the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Therefore, the apostle charges "Them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store



for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed.”

Many of the foremost men of influence in every period of the world's history have been poor in this world's goods, and yet they proved themselves benefactors of mankind. Wealth is not the only standard by which to estimate the greatness of men and their worth to human society. Wealth is no barrier but an inestimable asset with which to bless humanity if properly acquired and used, and no one should speak lightly of wealth as a power for good, but it also entails an awful responsibility. However, there have been many great benefactors, educators, and statesmen who could make no claim to wealth, but they were rich in service and good works, and the world calls them blessed. It is a grievous mistake that possesses the mind of so many that the supreme purpose and goal of a successful life is the acquirement of wealth, merely for personal pleasure and gratification; but that is supreme selfishness and has nothing to commend it, and deserves condemnation only. Neither can such enjoy the high satisfaction possible in life. To serve God and our fellow men is the highest ideal, and such as do, get the most out of life.

The lives of many have been wrecked because they determined to seek riches at any cost. Some ventured all on a gamble and lost all. The same spirit has led to dishonesty and disgrace. One of the well known scholars of India informs us that there are more than three hundred millions of gods in that country and everywhere we were reminded that India was a rich par-

adise for the gods, though millions of human beings have perished from the disastrous famines that have visited that deplorable country. All their countless gods are unable to help them, although their Pantheon contains vastly more than all the gods of ancient Greece and Rome. We have no polytheism in this country but the people of no age or country were ever more devoted to their chief god than the people of America are devoted—soul and body—to the god of money. The children of Israel worshipped the golden calf at Sinai not long after their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but the god of greatest attraction among us consists of the same material, though not in the same form. For this god many men and women will sacrifice all, even themselves. For it, they will give time, service, influence, honor, and moral character. Such a supreme place this god has in the mind of the American people. Hence the false standards of men and their subsequent fall into temptation, for they live and do as they think, and no man rises higher than his ideals. I have been amazed to hear men express themselves as though money were the supreme standard of values and even contend that the worth of every man in the community was to be determined by his earning capacity in money, and that the man who can get a salary of three thousand dollars is worth three times as much as the one who receives one thousand dollars a year. Whilst this may be true in the commercial world, it is unfortunate that any man should be so utterly lacking in his moral perspective for estimating the true values of life as to be so blind to the inestimable virtues of humanity that alone can

make a people great, but the value of which cannot be expressed in dollars and cents. They were the men who did their duty and who did not count the cost. They are the world's benefactors, though they amassed no fortune but were poor. All the world is under a debt of gratitude to Pasteur, whose unselfish labors and discoveries saved many millions of lives, but no thinking man would say that his income was the standard of his worth.

We must judge nothing before the time nor by the mere outward appearance, for things are not always as they seem. That many have been born with a fortune has proved their misfortune. It meant indulgence and a wasted life. Recently a millionaire young man who had spent his time in riotous living became so utterly disgusted with his life that he ended it by a suicidal act. Poverty and adversity often have meant a life of usefulness and honor for a struggling poor boy who became a benefactor of mankind. The vast majority among the leaders of men came from a humble origin. They struggled against adverse circumstances and they were made strong and became leaders of men and masters of finance.

Do not say that fate was against you and that—with your limited faculties and adverse circumstances—you were doomed to defeat, for you are mistaken. Can you conceive of a more unfortunate child than Helen Keller? She was deprived of more than two senses, for not only was she deaf and blind, but her power of speech was undeveloped; but she won out in the struggle for knowledge by taking the first honor when she graduated in Radcliffe College at Cambridge.



Insurmountable difficulties beset her way and she seemed completely hedged in, but read the startling history of her life and see how she triumphed! Read her booklet on *Optimism*,—a strange subject for her,—and it seems like a revelation emanating from one hedged in as she has been. If ever a woman seemed justified in being a pessimist, she was the one, and yet she became an optimist. Surely when you contrast your condition with hers, you can find no justification for being a pessimist.

Read the little book entitled *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch*, and you will laugh and cheer up and feel ashamed of your murmurings, for “if God be for us, who can be against us?” The book in question may seem extravagant at times, but not impossible. God can do as much for you. Your case is not so exceptional as you think and you must disabuse your mind of your self-delusion, and allow God to help you by reigning in your mind and heart. You only think that your case is the worst, but you are greatly mistaken. I know many more unfortunate ones but they have joined their lives to Christ; their lives are hid with Christ in God and the Spirit of God dwells in them. Hence they can endure and they can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth them.

You have the same heavenly Father and because you are His child and He has the same love for you and cares for you, for He seeks your welfare and He will encourage and help you.

The spirit of thanksgiving enriches us by enabling us to recognize and to appreciate fully the many blessings that we have, but which we fail to enjoy because

we overlook them by having our thoughts completely absorbed in the objects that are denied us. In times of sad bereavement all the affection seems centred on the departed one and the intense grief fills our eyes with tears that almost blind us to the loved ones that still remain, and we fail to realize all that they mean to us. All has not been taken; precious ones have been left to us, and with the spirit of thanksgiving for these, we must seek comfort in them.

Years ago, a man said to me on Thanksgiving Day, "Why should I give thanks to-day? I have nothing to be thankful for. I have no turkey." He seemed to justify himself in reasoning thus, but he had much to be thankful for. He had a vigorous body and a home, his wife and child enjoyed good health, and had no afflictions of body or mind, but the lack of a turkey was his cause for complaint. There were men who gladly would have given millions of dollars for his health and lease of life.

We say how thankful the miners must be after being rescued from days of terrible suffering in the living tomb where they were so nigh unto death from want and anxiety. But should not we be thankful who never have suffered such dreadful anxiety from impending death? We have much for which we should rejoice and be thankful. The believer has valuable assets and he should ever estimate them at their full value and not overlook them in times of trouble, but rejoice in the Lord always.

Christ is your Savior; you were included in His love and sacrifice on the cross and He did not die in vain. He is willing and able to do all that He promised and

you cannot doubt him, for He gave full proof of His love and countless numbers will testify in His behalf. What you need in your trials is not to yield to morbid feelings of despondency, but to make a venture of your faith. Arouse yourself and stand upon your feet like a man, and then—commanding all your resources and with faith in the help of the Almighty—say with a will, “What others have been able to endure, I can endure. I will be a free man and not a weak and cowardly slave.” All despise a coward and a weakling, but they admire a strong man with character and moral convictions.

Think of the millions who have passed through similar trying experiences. Their loss was just as great as yours; their heartaches just as sad and their disappointments as bitter. Others suffered wrongs and persecutions far greater and they were often frail in body, but grace was given them to endure. I have seen the father die and seven children left with a poor mother, and yet she clothed all the children, none of them starved, nor went to bed hungry. Since then, they have all grown into manhood and womanhood. Several years ago, when in a remote country place, a poor widowed mother was left with her dependent children, the neighbors thought their future looked very dark, but none of them was so hopeful as to see the day when one of the boys would fill the governor’s chair of the State of New York. God will not forsake His own. Listen to Jesus as He would inspire all with hope: “Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value



than they?"

I was profoundly impressed with this precious truth during a vacation spent in upper Canada. A bird had built her nest under the roof of a railroad station and she had hatched five little birds that filled the nest. They were helpless to provide for themselves and would have perished had not our heavenly Father given the mother bird the strong instinct to provide for them. Time and again she would return and bring a choice morsel and each of her brood would open wide its mouth, but that careful mother gave each one his portion in turn and no one was forgotten. With such a lesson Christ would teach us that our loving heavenly Father would see that His own orphaned children are fed. He touches the hearts of the people to provide for their necessities. Behold the orphanages and homes for the needy, and yield not to your gloomy temperament, but turn your mind to God with a trustful and loving heart, for the Lord will provide. No worthy man, woman, or child need go hungry, for our people are ready to feed them.

"Casting all your anxiety or distracting care upon Him, for He is concerned for you." This is what the divine message in the Bible tells you to do. It is a most precious revelation to know that God is concerned for our welfare. There can be no mistake about it. It is no human speculation or mere supposition; somewhat dim, perhaps, but the assurance of Holy Writ. Get this clear conception of God and cling firmly to it and you are safe. God is no indifferent spectator, but He watches over you with a loving care. He is not helpless nor inactive, but "He worketh in you to will and

to do according to His good pleasure." "Fear thou not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Grasp this precious truth, hold it tenaciously and cherish it as you do the encouraging words of your dearest absent friend. Repeat it over and over again when tried, until all gloomy thoughts are crowded out and the words of your Divine helper take complete possession of your mind. Let the words of Christ dwell in you richly, as the Apostle exhorts you. You can have just as clear a conception of Christ in your mind as you can of some absent friend, for the historic Christ of the Gospel is as real as any being that ever appeared on earth, and we must connect with him all his most precious sayings. It is the Christ who speaks to us through his promises. He can and will fulfill His promises. He is the same Jesus yesterday, to-day, and forever, and he is just as near and real to us as he was to his contemporaries in Palestine.

The elements of time and geographical distance are no barriers for the mind and heart of man. They cannot eliminate nor obscure the image of the object of our affection and contemplation. We can go back easily in thought through the centuries, and in a moment of time, to the period of history when Jesus was incarnate among men, and we can transport ourselves from the familiar scenes about us to the memorable ones witnessed in that land when Jesus preached the kingdom of God. We can have as clear and realistic mental pictures of the scenes then enacted in that distant land as we can of the events that happened but

yesterday in the adjoining street. Nay, more, in our home churches we can realize the presence and joys of Christ as fully as we can when worshipping in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. I have spent weeks in Jerusalem on several occasions and during Holy Week I have attended the worship of the Easter Services, yet—with all my intense longings for a deeper consciousness of Christ's presence, I must confess that often I have experienced as real and precious fellowship with my Lord and Master in the homes of my people and in worshipping with them in the Church. This is in accordance with Christ's promise: "Lo, I am with you always." He is not localized. Wherever the human soul goes out to Him in spirit and in truth, there is fellowship with Him.

We shall be greatly helped in our trials by remembering that others passed through similar and even greater ones, and what they were enabled to endure, we can endure also. This vision and contemplation will inspire us with confidence when suffering from our most trying experiences—for we have the same heavenly Father's loving care and the same Christ to sustain and comfort us, and who has promised that His grace is sufficient for us. Become familiar with the life and character of the Apostle Paul, for no man ever made a greater venture of his faith and tested Christ Jesus more thoroughly, hence his testimony is worth listening to. I like to meditate upon the testimony of Paul, for he speaks from personal experience after many years of severe testing from privations, suffering, and cruel persecution. He could not be mistaken for he had tried the faith in Christ and never found Him want-



ing, as his triumphant confessions abundantly show. He did not inherit this faith, but—as a man of learning and a profound and vigorous thinker in the study of the Jewish religion—he had grown up after the straightest sect and lived a Pharisee. He distinguished himself as the fiery persecutor of Christianity and, armed with authority, he went to Damascus to arrest all whom he might find as followers of Christ. But before approaching the city, Christ called to him from heaven and Paul became the most zealous advocate of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and rejoiced in prison and under stripes that he was accounted worthy to suffer for the sake of his Master. Visit him in his prison at Philippi, Jerusalem, Cæsarea, Rome, or elsewhere and listen to his words. Never does he lose faith or murmur against his Savior because of his sufferings nor regret his sacrifices for Christ, but always speaks with a triumphant faith. Hear him—as in brief review—he recalls some of the trials through which he had passed, for he could tell of his “abundant labors in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of rivers, perils of robbers, in perils of my countrymen, in perils of false brethren, in labor and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness . . . besides anxiety for all the churches.”

We must not lose faith and sink into despondency because of our trials, for they are not equal to those

Paul endured. Surely he had the most convincing and undeniable evidence for his faith. He was a cotemporary and knew the men who had seen and heard his Lord and Master. Nay, more, he tells us that he himself had seen the Lord and received special revelations from Him. To convince the once zealous Pharisee and convert him to Christ, required the most indubitable proof, and this was confirmed by the steadfastness of his subsequent life.

At Lystra the multitude scarcely could be restrained from sacrifices to the Apostles because, through the words of Paul, the impotent man had been healed. Later, that same multitude was converted into an angry mob by the wicked Jews who came from Antioch and Iconium, and they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city like a dog, supposing that he was dead.

At Jerusalem the fanatical Jews violently seized Paul in the temple, dragged him out, and sought to kill him, when the chief captain rushed to his rescue with the Roman guard and saved him from the murderous mob. Standing on the stairs leading to the castle, the captain gave the Apostle permission to speak to the Jews. They listened for a time until he told how God sent him unto the Gentiles: "And then they lifted up their voice and said 'Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live.'" The verdict of history has proved that their judgment was false, for none of them was so fit to live as he, and none of them blessed humanity as he did, but all that consecrated and unselfish life did not secure for him immunity from many of the most grievous trials. However, his faith never failed him, and amid the greatest

trials he never regretted following Christ, nor showed a craven spirit. During that tempestuous voyage across the Mediterranean, after many days of terrible anxiety, amid the storm that threatened them with disaster, and when captain and sailors despaired of escape, then Paul—the prisoner—stood forth in the midst of them and inspired all with hope by his cheering words. He was the most heroic and hopeful one of them all for he remembered the night when—confined in the castle in Jerusalem, after escaping from being torn to pieces by the angry mob—how the Lord stood by him and said: “Be of good cheer, for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.” Hence he knew that he could not perish at sea, since the Lord had sent him to preach in Rome, and he would keep his promise, for Paul was a man who trusted God with an unshaken faith. But that very night, on the stormy deep, the Lord remembered him with a special message as the Apostle told them: “For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, saying ‘Fear not, Paul: thou must stand before Cæsar, and lo, God hath granted thee all them that sail with thee.’ Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me.”

Paul was a thoroughly human man. He had temptations and often was tried and cast down, but not in despair, for he never was forsaken. He said, “I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me.” He suffered from the thorn in the flesh, whatever that grievous physical infirmity may have been, and from which he thrice besought the Lord to deliver him. It



seemed to be a great hindrance in his work and doubtless he would have continued to pray for its removal, but the Lord gave him this answer of hope: "My grace is sufficient for thee." We shall have afflictions from which we cannot be delivered, such as the natural infirmities of the body, disappointments, sickness, bereavements and death, but for all these when they come, God's grace will be sufficient for us also.

Visit Paul in Rome and listen to his testimony when a prisoner: "I know him whom I have believed and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed unto him against that day." "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." "At my first defense no one took my part, but all forsook me; may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me. . . . The Lord will deliver me from every evil and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom."

Like the Apostle, we must ever keep two worlds in view, and then—with him—we may reckon "that the sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward." "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." It is altogether reasonable that we should keep our eternal and heavenly inheritance in view, just as the rightful heir to an estate ever keeps in mind and enjoys the future possession that shall be his when he reaches his majority. If we put our implicit trust in Christ with the same unflinching faith, and ever view both worlds in their right relation to each other, then

we may also be enabled to say:—"Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not to the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Now the present material things seem the most to many, but in a moment the unseen spiritual becomes the most real, as when the loved ones pass from us to the unseen world. They are still real to us, yea, a very part of us, as we realize when the heart almost breaks with the agony of bereavement. Then the unseen world becomes very real to us because the loved ones have gone thither, and in the depths of our soul we follow them. To them that once unseen world is now the most real. But soon we shall follow them, and then that spiritual world will be most real to us, and this world will no longer interest us most.

Death causes great sorrows and no wonder that we dread it. We would defer it and we do everything possible to prolong life,—not because we fear death, but because of the bitter grief and the terrible loneliness caused by it and the violence to the attractions of life. Everything is changed, the charms of life have been suddenly blasted and its joys quenched. Instead of rejoicing, there is mourning, and then men are ready to take up the lament of Job: "I would not live away." Then we must turn to Christ who brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel and assures us

of our life eternal. If we could see our loved ones but for a moment in their heavenly home, then our grief would be mitigated in knowing that they were blessed, and had escaped all the trials and sorrows of this life. But we profess to believe this, and we should cling to the divine promise and then "the God of hope would fill you with all joy and peace in believing."

By the sheer power of our will we should at times change our point of view that is temporary at most and transport ourselves in imagination to our heavenly home, and from that abode contemplate the trials of this life and as they will appear to us fifty years hence, or possibly much earlier. It is only a matter of time and it does not seem long since our parents and loved ones went thither, and soon our summons will come. Our time on earth seems short as we take a retrospect of the few years we have lived, but the years to come will also be few on earth and hence we should never separate this life from the heavenly, but keep that home in view when suffering the trials that afflict us here. This was a weighty argument for Paul when making a forcible contrast between the temporal and the eternal, and we should employ the same comparison.

Though we would escape the trials of life, often they prove to be great blessings and necessary for our highest development. We never would develop into the noblest manhood and womanhood and appreciate the lot of others unless we had passed through the school of similar struggles. They teach us from personal experience what otherwise we could not have known, and they fit us for a life of service for others. This affords the highest satisfaction possible for man to enjoy. He



alone truly can suffer with another who has suffered a similar sorrow in his own experience. The two bereaved mothers know what the word sympathy originally meant and they can suffer with each other. Severe trials that once tried the souls of men and women, and from which they prayed to escape as seeming misfortunes, made them heroes and heroines, and secured for them a proud immortality. There can be no great souls developed except through the schooling of trials. Great men must be grown just as an efficient military force must be trained. Trials test and ennoble us to see ourselves as we are. They broaden our horizon and show us the path that others trod before they achieved success. The young often make the mistake of seeking for the achievement of masters of finance by a single bound or gamble, instead of starting at the base of the ladder, practicing the same economy, self-denial, and principles of business. The successful men did not squander their time, health, and earnings, but improved them and seized every opportunity in the way of advancement. They were disciplined by years of trials as they struggled for the mastery in achievement.

No one can expect to escape from the trials of life, for they are the common lot of humanity. But there are often trials of the most grievous character and it is wonderful how bravely some have endured them. At times I have been amazed at the power of endurance displayed by men and women under the most trying circumstances. They endured because they realized God's presence and that His grace was sufficient for them. They trusted God and they realized that He is precious to those who believe in Him. God is our heavenly

Father and He can sustain His children. "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," for He is deeply concerned for the highest welfare of His children. Hence we often have been surprised at the strong faith, patient endurance, and cheerful disposition of some when suffering the great trials of life, for they realized fellowship with Christ in their suffering.

We must look to our suffering Savior and cling to Him and His precious promises and not nourish and encourage our unsubstantial and ever-changing feelings. Whatever our moods may be, Christ remains ever the same. Make the personal Christ a supreme and controlling reality in your daily life. Feel the power of His presence and indwelling as you meditate upon His words: "Abide in Me and I will abide in you," until you realize that mystical union by His quickening of your spirit and inspiration of your thoughts and purposes.

He helps by "his working which worketh in me mightily" is the testimony of Paul, and we have the same Christ who wants to help and save us. Personalize Jesus so that in imagination you may see Him by visualizing the scenes of His life among men, for you have the Gospel record of the facts connected with that life. Then you will realize the power of His love in your heart and be able to say with the disciple of Jesus after His ascension: "Whom not having seen we love;" for we can love the absent ones and those in heaven whom we cannot see. To the believer, God is no dim abstraction but a personal spiritual being, who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, and they that have

seen Christ have seen the Father also. He abides with us and this immanent personal spirit is just what Christ promised, and this assurance is our hope, peace, joy, and salvation. Nothing could separate Paul from the love of Christ, but he was ever ready to endure all things for His sake, for Christ was a personal reality. Make the Christ of history very real by familiarizing yourself with His personality and life as recorded in the Gospels.

No one need question the historic facts, for they have been tested thoroughly and established beyond reasonable controversy, and what we need is not to try to prove them again, but to get such a clear conception of them that we may see them in all their reality, just as in our minds we have a clear picture of the character and life of Washington, not from any personal observation but from recorded history. By a similar process we may be able to gain a clear picture of the person and life of Christ Jesus and such clear realism is all important for our fellowship and living faith in Him.

The Greeks who came to the disciples had heard of the Master, but they yearned for an objective realism and they said: "Sirs, we would see Jesus." On the evening of that resurrection day, after all the reports and uncertainty respecting His resurrection from the dead, Jesus suddenly appeared in the midst of the disciples, and the record tells us that "The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord." You cannot see the physical Jesus as the disciples did, but that is not necessary, and even doubting Thomas, when he saw Jesus, did not need the tangible material tests that he had de-



clared previously that he would insist upon. He was thoroughly convinced without them and the disciples were never so heroic, and so invincible in faith as they became when their eyes saw Jesus no more. They had the overmastering consciousness that God was with them and that they must obey God rather than Man. That God-consciousness made the timid disciples strong, and nothing could deter them from their purpose as they went forth to conquer the world for the Christ who had given them their commission, coupled with the assurance: "And lo, I am with you always." They knew the Christ and realized the sustaining and comforting power of His presence.

We cannot ever estimate the value of this consciousness and we should cultivate it until it takes complete possession of us, for such personal fellowship is what Jesus promised us and it is our privilege to enjoy. He always is present with us in the fulness of his divine majesty as the incarnate Son of God, and through his eternal Spirit he inspires, encourages, sustains, and comforts in every time of need. We should not be satisfied until we in a measure, at least, can say with the Apostle, "Christ dwelleth in me."

Always trust in God and do your best, and then you cannot fail. You have done your duty and neither God nor man can demand more of you. But have faith in God at all times. No matter how many and rich His promises may be, unless we avail ourselves of them and believe in God and accept His proffered help, we get no benefit. Faith is the will and hand of the man struggling amid the waves, but who at once seizes the life-preserver when it is thrown to him. What we may

be unable to do alone, we can do when our faith takes hold of Christ, for then we have His superadded grace to strengthen us by our union with Him. No matter what God may be and may desire to do for us, we must have our minds in a receptive state to receive His help, His peace and joy, for "unto him that believeth, He is precious." We know the power that our mothers exercised over our minds when they sought to comfort us in times of trouble, but the secret of that power was in the fact that we were persuaded that they loved us, and we confidently believed what they promised us. In like manner, we must feel the power of Christ's love and trust Him with a firm faith and then we will realize His sustaining and comforting power. It was this invincible faith in the ever-present, Almighty Helper that made the heroes of the Church, for weak men and women were made strong. That persistent faith was the secret of the indomitable will and triumph of the Apostle Paul. He trusted not in himself alone, but in Christ who dwelt in him, and hence his dauntless spirit.

When cheerless and most sorely distressed in spirit, suffering from losses and disappointments and the infirmities of the body, with the buoyant spirit of youth gone, do not yield to feelings, for nothing is so unreliable. In such moments turn to God's Word for relief, and do not afflict your soul with morbid thoughts that make you miserable, but repeat the comforting messages that you need: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the help of my countenance and my God." "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will

give you rest . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful." "I will come again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also."

Even our Savior could not give us more previous assurances than those contained in the Gospel, and we do not need more, but we should know and cherish these and call them to remembrance until we feel their power. Thus we may crowd out and keep out the many distracting thoughts that afflict the soul with doubts and fears, but do no good. Use your will power and think the thoughts that make for peace and triumph. Cultivate the spirit of thanksgiving until it becomes a habit, and then you will escape many of the anxious thoughts that afflict the soul when mastered by the spirit of corroding care and useless worry. The Apostle gives the antidote that was efficacious in his own life and we should use it: "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known unto God. And the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus."

When disturbed with anxious thoughts, worried, and nervous, then look unto Jesus and listen to his comforting words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled; neither let it be fearful." Repeat them until you realize that peace of God.



When cast down and almost overcome with the sorrow of great disappointment, then try to master your hearts and feelings, and repeat the words of the Psalmist: "God is my refuge and my strength—a very present help in trouble." These passages and many others you should store in your mind, and meditate upon them in time of trouble—"ever looking unto Jesus," for there is an uplift of helpfulness in that look. Repeat choice passages frequently until they become a part of you, and then you will realize their power.

The temptation in times of great disappointment and sorrow, is to think only of our sorrows, and to lose sight of all else that remains. Rachel refused to be comforted in bereavement, because her children were not with her. When Jacob was led to believe that his favorite son, Joseph, had been slain, he mourned many days, though all his sons and daughters endeavored to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted; and he said: "For I will go to Sheol, to my son, mourning." He abandoned all hope, refused to consider the things that remained, and concluded that there was nothing else worth living for. It was the look and feeling of despair; but he was greatly mistaken as to his forecast of the future.

So was Job when his dreadful misfortunes proved too much for him. He was overwhelmed with grief, and like many others in times of great adversity, he wished that he were dead. Nay, more, he wished that he never had been born; for he was weary of his life, because of the dreadful afflictions; and he thought only of these, and forgot the days of the right hand of the Lord when he rejoiced greatly with his happy family

amid signal prosperity. But the tables had been turned, and hence he said, "Man that is born of woman, is of few days and full of trouble," for he thought only of his sorrows, and did not hope for the day when Jehovah would "turn the captivity of Job," and bless the latter end, even more than the beginning.

In our sorrows we must not lose sight of Christ and His precious promises; for He cares for us though we see not the hand that leads us. Like Mary, our tears may blind us to the presence of Jesus himself; for on Easter morning, she wept so bitterly that she failed to recognize Him, even when He said unto her: "Woman, why weepest thou?" Not until He called her by her name, Mary, did she recognize her gracious Lord and Master. She was controlled by sorrow and disappointment in not finding the dead body of Jesus in the tomb where it had been laid on Good Friday. Now the tomb was empty and that body had disappeared. But she should have rejoiced; for the living Christ who had risen from the dead, meant infinitely more to her and to all the world, than the lifeless body in the tomb. She had forgotten the words of Jesus, and hence she failed to rejoice when she saw the empty tomb. Jesus had risen from the dead as he had told his disciples, though they failed to understand and remember it after the tragedy on Calvary. Jesus was alive for evermore, and now we have unquestioned proof that because He lives, we shall live also in the spirit world when this brief earthly career ends. No wonder that Christ said to Mary, "Woman, why weepest thou?" for she should have rejoiced. We often weep and refuse to be comforted, though Jesus is near; for we see only

our trouble, and not its real meaning and relation to the eternal future. Without faith, there is no hope, only despair, and all noble achievement would be impossible. Faith is "The victory that overcometh the world." It has made all the heroes past and present; and all the devoted mothers with their lives consecrated to a supreme purpose.

Faith is essential to the most ordinary domestic, social, business, and political relations; and we practise it in the daily affairs of life. It is not limited to the realm of religion; for in all things we walk by faith, not by sight, not knowing what a day may bring forth. We all have been stimulated by the dynamic of faith in our own powers, as well as in the fidelity of others. Every investment is inseparable from faith; and every employer must have faith in his employee. Man and wife must have faith in each other. God himself has faith in man, and entrusts him with the extension of his kingdom on earth, both at home and abroad. He gave the commission: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

All the heroes of history who achieved greatness were men of strong faith; and, sustained by that irresistible dynamic, they hesitated not to make the venture of faith, even though to men of less vision, the difficulties seemed insurmountable. The timid man or the coward who is held under the tyranny of fear, and afraid to say that his soul is his own, would never risk



his fortune, his life, and sacred honor for the public good.

Jesus said unto his disciples, "Have faith in God." This is all-important for our peace; for "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed in Thee." This repose of the soul comes from the assurance of the divine indwelling, and that our sins have been forgiven; for "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." But in order that we may realize this peace, we must live in right relations with God. We must, by an active exercise of faith, maintain the right mental attitude toward Christ; and "let the peace of God rule in your hearts." He must have the supremacy, and you must keep yourself in the love of God. "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace whereto we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."











